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ABSTRACT

A study examined the feasibility of using television to promote adult literacy and adult basic education (ABE) in South Africa. Following a review of the literature on the experience abroad in using television to promote adult literacy, a preliminary report arguing the case for using television to promote adult literacy and ABE in South Africa was prepared and sent to a wide range of specialists and practitioners in the field for their comments. Although the project aroused the interest and support of a majority of the consultants, reservations and arguments raised against the project were substantial. Therefore, execution of the project in its original form could not be recommended. However, because the consultants were unanimous in their feeling that using television to promote ABE is urgently needed, it was recommended that serious consideration be given to the possibility of establishing a research and resource center to support adult literacy and ABE programs in industry. Appendixes to this report make up nearly half the document. They include the literature review on experience abroad in using television in ABE; the preliminary report on the use of television in education and training; data on the distribution of formal education levels among adults in South Africa, the changing structure of the working population, and the occupational structure of the South African labor force; and an assessment of the need for literacy in industry. (MN)

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Report Soling-10

The potential of television in the promotion of adult literacy

Edward French

CE 044 325

Pretoria
Human Sciences Research Council
1986

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Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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FOREWORD

This report is concerned with one specific possibility in the promotion of adult literacy and basic education in South Africa. It is negative about the immediate potential of television, but it should be useful in a number of respects:

- Although the urgency of the need for development in this field is made clear, especially in the preliminary report, but also in the response of the consultants whose advice was sought, the prospect of a successful movement in the private sector, or elsewhere for that matter, is uncertain. The insights which the report provides in this respect should be of interest to anyone concerned in the field.

- The planning in the preliminary report should be helpful as one model for the planning of similar developments.

- The unorthodox methodology of the study itself offers an interesting departure for this kind of investigation.

- The discussion (34-41) argues the need for development in the field to be carried out in a spirit of inquiry, and suggests a number of ways in which knowledge could profitably be extended. Anyone who would like to see growth which is an authentic and critical response to properly identified needs is likely to endorse this argument.

- The literature review, presented as an appendix to the report, provides a condensed and interesting consideration of the possibilities and problems concerning the role of television in adult literacy and basic education, and offers a useful resource to anyone contemplating future projects in this field.

G.K. Schuring
Head of Division: Sociolinguistic Research

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Barry Ackerman, Language and literacy teacher responsible for the development of courses for the SADF's adult education programme.

John Aitchison, Head of Adult Education, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

Dr N. Alberts, Deputy Chairman of the National Manpower Commission and member of the National Training Board when this inquiry was in progress.

Gael Allan, Independent adult education consultant and formerly a researcher for the Urban Foundation in Natal.

Dr F.E. Auerbach, Educationist, director of Funda Centre, Soweto, and formerly President of the Institute of Race Relations.

Dr K.B. Baucom, Director of Consulting Educators and Trainers and a UNESCO consultant on literacy work.

Mr A.K.J. Bechtold, Training Manager, Harmony Gold Mine.

Adrienne Bird (in consultation with colleagues), worker education specialist, FOSATU (Federation of South African Trade Unions).

Norman Blight, Senior lecturer, Applied Linguistics, Wits University.

Mr B. Buys, Director: Adult Education, Department of Education and Training.

Allan Chadwick, visiting consultant on the training of trainers from the British Council and member of the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit, UK.

Marion Clifford (in consultation with colleagues), course developer, USWE (Using Spoken and Written English).

Barry Coetzee and Helena Spring, Directors of SCY (TV and video production).

Dr Ruth Colvin, Founder and director of Literacy Volunteers of America.

David Coolbear, Video course writer, KwaZulu Development Corporation.

Dr P. de Vries, Education evaluation specialist, Wits University,

formerly of the Human Resources Laboratory of the Chamber of Mines.

Harry Dhlamini, Deputy Training Manager of Barlow Rand's adult education project.

Sandy d'Oliveira, Director of Operation Upgrade in consultation with his wife Louise, formerly of Laubach International.

Harold Donsky, researcher in the Training Studies Division, National Institute for Personnel Research (NIPR).

Mrs G. Erasmus, Education official at the National Training Board.

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Prof B. Fouche, Professor of Library Science, Unisa, when this inquiry was in progress, and a specialist in the promotion of reading in South Africa.

Dr H.P. Fourie, Chief Director, Division for Social Planning in the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning, formerly Professor of Communication Studies, Unisa.

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Prof H. Kroes, Department of General and Applied Linguistics, Rand Afrikaans University.

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Anton Muller, Senior researcher, Institute for Educational Research, HSRC, and member of the panel which researched the use of radio and TV in education.

Charles Nuttal, Specialist in English for Special Purposes, University of Bophuthatswana.

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Anne Pappenheim, Associate Director, Deloitte, Haskins and Sells (Accountants).

Commandant L. Potgieter, Head of adult education programmes in the SADF's Language Bureau.

Johann Pretorius, A director of Louise Smit Productions (specialising in educational TV programmes) and formerly director of BLL.

Mastin Prinsloo, Adult education practitioner, formerly co-ordinator of Learn and Teach, and lecturer in the sociology of education, Wits University.

Elaine Proctor, Producer and director, Loy Films.

Mrs T. Retief, Head of the Training Studies Division, NIPR.

Victor Rodseth, Educationist, formerly director of the English Language Teaching Information Centre, leader of the Molteno Project, part time script writer for adult education programmes, SABC and adult education researcher, Wits.

Mr J. Reitz, Language teaching specialist, SADF Language Bureau.

Josephine Rowe, Journalist, Training and Development Forum.

Gerard Schuring, Assistant Director, Institute for Research into Language and the Arts (IRLA), HSRC.

Angela Shaffer, Researcher in adult education, Centre for Extra-Mural Studies, UCT.

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Betsy Stoltz, Senior Researcher (IRLA), HSRC, currently investigating language in the work situation.

Kate Turkington, Director of the Television Unit, Wits University, and producer of the SABC's first social literacy programmes.

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explaining related work of their own in the field. Lastly, Barry Ackermann devoted one of a series of discussion groups, which he organised with great enthusiasm, to the discussion of the proposal.

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OPSOMMING

Die ondersoek, wat in opdrag van die Mannekrag- en Bestuurstigting onderneem is, handel oor die wenslikheid asook die moontlike sukses van die gebruik van televisie-uitsendings vir die bevordering van geletterdheid en basiese onderwys van volwassenes, veral in 'n industriële konteks. 'n Volledige motivering en beplanning vir so 'n TV-projek is aan verskeie raadgewers op verskillende gebiede vir hul kommentaar en evaluering voorgelê. Alhoewel die meeste raadgewers ten gunste van die projek was en dit ondersteun het, was daar ook voorbehoude en besware teen die projek. Ten spyte van die moontlikhede wat die projek inhou, kan die uitvoering daarvan in sy oorspronklike vorm nie aanbeveel word nie. Die raadgewers het egter saamgestem dat ontwikkeling op hierdie gebied dringend nodig is. Daar was ook wye belangstelling in die potensiaal wat videomateriaal as 'n ondersteunende medium inhou vir basiese volwassene-onderwys. Daar word dus voorgestel dat aandag geskenk word aan die moontlikheid om 'n navorsings- en datasentrum ter ondersteuning van geletterdheids- en basiese onderwysprogramme vir volwassenes in die nywerheid te stig. Met só 'n sentrum kan spesiale aandag gegee word aan die gebruik van videomateriaal, en die beplanning vir hierdie ondersoek sou moontlik riglyne vir die aanvangsfase daarvan kon verskaf.

SUMMARY

The investigation, commissioned by the Manpower and Management Foundation of Southern Africa (MMF), concerns the desirability and likely success of using broadcast television to promote adult literacy and basic education, particularly in an industrial context. A full motivation and planning was submitted to a wide range of consultants for their comment and evaluation. Although the project aroused interest and the support of a majority of the consultants, reservations and arguments raised against the project were substantial. In spite of its apparent promise the execution of the project in its original form can therefore not be recommended. The consultants were however unanimous that development in the field is urgently needed, and there was wide interest in the potential of video as a supportive medium in adult basic education (ABE). It is thus suggested that attention be given to the possibility of establishing a research and resource centre to support adult literacy and basic education programmes in industry. Such a centre could pay special attention to the use of video, and the planning drawn up for this investigation could provide guidelines for the initial stages of its establishment.

CHAPTER 1

THE NATURE OF THE INVESTIGATION

1.1 AN OVERVIEW

This chapter is concerned with the aims of the investigation, the methodology adopted and the course of the investigation. The central purpose of the chapter is to establish the credentials of the project and to discuss the limitations of the information offered and the conclusions drawn in the later chapters. Those most interested in the findings and conclusions might well continue directly to the appropriate sections. Readers are advised however to take note of the appended preliminary report, as much of what is discussed here assumes some familiarity with its contents.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND AIMS

The aim of this study was to examine the feasibility of using television to promote adult literacy and basic education in South Africa. The idea of doing this was initiated by the Manpower and Management Foundation (MMF), who were concerned about the effect on industrial training and productivity of limited basic education, and particularly of poor language communication skills. The MMF felt that the most significant contribution which they could make to overcoming

this problem might be to provide backing for adult literacy and language lessons which would be broadcast nationally, possibly using the TV1 channel, which has the widest reach, during hours when the test pattern is normally displayed. Tentative interest in such a project had been expressed informally at a high level by the SABC. Should the feasibility of such a project be positively established, the MMF hoped to enlist support for it from overseas funding bodies interested in development in South Africa.

Conducting a feasibility study for a project of this nature in the field of adult basic education in South Africa posed a number of problems. The field itself is underdeveloped and is subject to many of the vicissitudes and ambiguities which face development efforts in this country and elsewhere. The whole question of worker education, for example, brings into focus conflicts of ideology and practice inherent in the South African situation. But beyond this, there lay the fact that the study would centre on the evaluation of an as yet unrealised proposal whose ultimate form was difficult to imagine. As Dr G. Swanson, an American specialist in non-formal education, pointed out in an HSRC seminar on non-formal education: "One cannot establish the need for something which does not exist." In a commercial sense a feasibility study is concerned with the likely profitability of a project, be it the marketing of soap powder, or the building of a supermarket or a motorway. This requires the balancing of costs against expected profits or benefits. However, a feasibility study is nearly always concerned with a known quantity; soap powder, supermarkets and motorways are not innovations. When there is an innovative element in the project, it is normal to create a sample of

the product involved and to test its marketability empirically. But in the case of the present project such an exercise in research and development is itself enormously expensive. Moreover, it would be inappropriate to carry the parallel between market research and the evaluation of an educational project too far; the latter is far too closely involved with questions of values, with socio-political implications and with long term effects to be reduced to the level of marketability. There are too many intangibles involved to allow for simple measures of benefit.

The present study was undertaken, therefore, not as a feasibility study in the conventional sense of the word, but as an exploration of the desirability and likely success of undertaking both a full pilot study and the project as a whole.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The first approach to such a study which came to mind was the idea of a questionnaire survey of a range of possible users of TV ABE instruction. It seemed clear however that this approach had severe limitations, apart from being beyond the resources of the project. For the questions on any issue about which the respondents have relatively little relevant experience must be largely hypothetical, and the results would be subject to even greater vagaries than standard questionnaire research (1). The inappropriateness of such an approach becomes abundantly clear when one considers that a significant number of the respondents would be likely to be puzzled by being asked questions requiring an imaginative leap into future possibilities which

even people with relevant expertise might struggle to conceptualise. At the same time the use of survey methods adequate to the questions involved would have been inordinately expensive.

As it turned out, the approach to this project was essentially pragmatic, and was informed by a dialectical method. Here the emphasis is placed on interaction and growth, the aim being to establish a richness of insight on which decisions can be based, rather than to strive for conclusiveness, an often illusory goal (2).

The primary feature of the methodology of this investigation has been the stance of the researcher. From the beginning I adopted a positive interest in promoting the proposed project. Being committed to the development of adult literacy and basic education in South Africa, I did not find this difficult. At the same time I reserved my opinion about the desirability or the feasibility of the project. Such an approach is compatible with the spirit of the emergent methodology of participation research, although the study can in no sense be described as participatory research as such (3). The dialectic in my approach lies in the conflict between the position of a proponent and the intention to remain sceptical. Further dialectical features of the method have been the dialogue between myself and the initiators of the project, between the ideas generated there and the experience reflected in international literature, between the more fully articulated idea and the experience of local practitioners, between a comprehensive motivation of the project and the critical assessments of a very divergent range of specialists, often in debate, and finally between the accumulated and conflicting points of view and the researcher's conception of the project.

1.4 THE COURSE OF THE PROJECT

After negotiating the scope of the project with the director of the MMF, I carried out a literature survey on the use of television in ABE, at the same time taking every opportunity to discuss the project with people interested in the field. This process was crystallised in a number of closer interviews with people with relevant expertise, and led to the writing of a preliminary report.

This preliminary report (Text for Comment), which is appended to the present report, with minor editorial revision, provides a broad argument for the urgency of the need for ABE in South Africa. It then argues the case for the potential of television to satisfy this need, without ignoring the substantial problems accompanying this potential. Indeed, the maintenance of an underlying ambiguity, apart from reflecting something of my own attitude to the project, can be seen as a deliberate stratagem. The MMF's idea is followed through with a broadly planned possible approach to the project in order to gain a clearer understanding of its implications in terms of personnel, time, costs and logistics. As this centred on the idea of a full pilot project a detailed consideration of the precise form and content of the programmes to be developed was avoided. Some concrete notions of how the actual programmes might look lay behind the planning, but it seemed that at this stage detail would be unduly prescriptive, both for those who would be commenting and for whoever might lead the project should it appear to be feasible. The report is supported by a separate survey of the available literature on television in ABE.

After being submitted to the MMF's board to ensure that it reflected their intentions adequately, the report was printed, with careful attention to the formatting in order to elicit as full and varied a critical response as possible. Features of its format were:

- a high quality of presentation to encourage serious attention.
- a number of explicit textual elements which made it amply clear that the report was in no sense final.
- the inclusion of suggestions for various approaches to its critical appraisal which, as one commentator pointed out, "left one with little chance of avoiding the task".
- the reversal of the normal format, with the text on the left and the blank page on the right. This, combined with spiral binding, was intended as an encouragement to comment, and as a constant reminder of the provisional nature of the text.
- the inclusion of a brief multiple-choice questionnaire to clarify aspects of the response.

The report was then sent to a range of specialists and practitioners in relevant fields with a covering letter including a personal note.

While the response was being awaited I was able to follow up certain leads provided by those who answered early. As a result some brief but significant additions have been made to the literature review (Appendix A). During the course of the investigation the President's Council published its report on non-formal education in South Africa and the HSRC published the report of a work-committee which had studied the use of radio and TV in education. The latter report (Appendix B) has influenced the findings of the present study.

When it appeared that no further returns were likely I set about analysing the content by summarizing each individual's central response to the proposal, collating all comments on specific points in the preliminary report and tabulating the responses to the questionnaire.

1.5 VALIDITY

In an investigation such as this there can of course be no talk of validity in the empiricist's sense of the word. Nonetheless, the question must be asked, to what extent the information presented here should be taken seriously. There being no precise measure, it is the reader who must judge the answer to the question. What has gone before should provide assistance in arriving at such an answer; what is offered now concerns the researcher's own position, the range of consultants and their reaction to the preliminary report.

It has not been easy to bring order to a wide variety of essentially qualitative comment, and it is inevitable that the opinions of those with a depth of experience in the field have had more influence than the opinions of those whose involvement is recent and perhaps purely academic. The range of the comment is reflected as fully as possible in this report, but selection has of course been unavoidable. As I have stood at the centre of the dialectic, and as the information which is given here has inevitably been shaped by my own consciousness, the findings reported here cannot be described as objective. Instead, the aim has been what may be called a broadly-based intersubjective validity rather than any measurable level of consensus.

The conducting of this research has coincided with a number of projects which have provided growth in my own insight regarding issues closely related to the subject of this study. I have been directly involved in four seminars of widely varying nature which have been concerned with adult literacy and basic education in the private sector. These seminars have more than anything made clear the complexity of the issues and conflicts involved in worker education, and the extent of the lack of depth in our knowledge or commitment to this endeavour. Two further projects have also been important influences, both being concerned in different ways with relating adult learning projects to needs - the one on behalf of the library institute, the other for the adult education programme in the Ciskei. While the first project was concerned largely with theoretical issues in the determination of needs, the second was a very concrete attempt to find ways in which adult literacy and basic education could be more closely related to the life and work needs of the people being served. All of these undertakings have of necessity coloured and informed the perceptions which are brought to the present study.

The comment on the preliminary report was returned over several months. Some of the early comment contained perspectives which placed the project in a changing light. Alternative possibilities were explored more fully with a number of the consultants who wished to follow up their review of the proposal in interviews or telephone discussions. The tentative suggestions for alternative approaches which conclude this report are therefore not merely the result a personal assessment of the comment, although they are obviously not as fully researched as the original proposal.

The people whose views were obtained in this study do not represent a formal sample. On the whole they were selected on the basis of my knowledge of the field in South Africa, although as the investigation proceded further contacts were suggested by colleagues and others already involved. Every attempt was made to spread the net widely to include consultants (a word which, in the present context, is used in preference to "respondents") across the ideological spectrum from those in a position to articulate the position of state and business to those committed to alternative approaches to future development in South Africa, and across a variety of related fields. The best idea of the range of consultants whose views were obtained in this study can be gained by referring to the Acknowledgements which preface this report. It is difficult to categorise this body of talented and committed individuals, especially as many of them have interests in a number of fields. A further difficulty lies in the fact that some of the responses were organised collectively, and only the co-ordinator of the response is mentioned. Nonetheless the following groupings provide some understanding of the range:

13 People involved in the provision of education in the business sector

14 People involved in the provision of supportive services for ABE (often with an element of direct provision)

10 Academic specialists in adult education

13 Academic specialists in related fields, especially applied linguistics

7 State (including SABC) officials in relevant fields

12 Independent television and video production specialists

5 Specialists in ABE from abroad

Seventy-eight copies of the preliminary report were distributed, and 74 responses are recorded here. In some cases the responses were submitted on the basis of copies shared by a number of people. Personal contact was made or attempted in order to secure as broad a response as possible. The attempt to elicit comment from business management was not very successful. However, many of the people in the first two groups listed are aware of the situation in the private sector and of the interests and problems of management.

Two possible criticisms of the approach reflected here must be mentioned. In the first place, there has been some criticism recently of the overemphasis on the use of experts in educational planning (4). This criticism flows from reflections on the technicism implicit in much of this planning. Considering the methodological problems discussed in section 2 above, it is difficult to see how this feature could have been avoided at this stage in the investigation. However, negative aspects of such an approach have been avoided to some extent by not seeking what may be called a consensus of expertise, and by giving a very broad interpretation to the notion of specialisation.

The second criticism cannot be escaped; this lies in the racial mix of the consultants. The fact that so few of the consultants are black is an unfortunate reflection on our situation, in which the weight of decision making powers and expertise lie so overwhelmingly in the hands of whites. This criticism is only qualified by the quality of the contribution of the black consultants involved, and by their openness. It is a matter of some consolation that they displayed a range of opinion on the proposal which had as broad a spectrum as any, and that

the range of opinion among the white consultants was as wide, perhaps, as it could be.

On the whole the report was well received. Two consultants and one group felt that the preliminary report should have been more explicit about the actual content of the programmes envisaged, and two would have liked to see a clearer line of commitment to a defined set of principles. Otherwise the report elicited unsolicited praise: "An excellent report", "a superb document", "we all liked your text very much", "I enjoyed working through the proposal", "very interesting" , "you seem to have thought of everything", were some of the general comments which were offered. A number of consultants either retained their copies and submitted separate comment, or asked if they could have their copies back. In two cases information and ideas in the document were used in memoranda, and in one case in an article (in spite of the proviso on the title page). The praise was offered by those who were opposed to the proposal or who had substantial criticisms of points in the text, as much as by those who were in favour of it. The open-endedness of the approach to the investigation was warmly commended by several of the consultants.

There is an interesting side-effect to the approach in terms of broad communication in the field involved, as it was quite obvious from certain of the reactions that the document was far better studied, and had a deeper impact than might have been the case were it a final official report. That the approach yielded more insight than any questionnaire or interview without briefing would have done seems unquestionable.

CHAPTER 2

FINDINGS

2.1 AN OVERVIEW

In this chapter the responses of the consultants involved are presented as objectively as possible. For the sake of at least a minimum coherence in the presentation of a diversity of points of view, points made have at times been amplified; this is the case especially where they were presented very briefly or in discussion, and where they were suggestive rather than explicit. As some of the opinions expressed are controversial, any reference to the names of the consultants has been consistently avoided.

The chapter presents a quantitative analysis of the response to the questionnaire, which is broadly positive about the project, followed by the general comment, which offers a decidedly negative response, largely because those in favour of the project seldom had anything specific to add to their approval, while, as one might expect, those opposed to it had more to say in presenting their arguments. The broad issues concern questions about the very nature of ABE and worker education in South Africa, and about the appropriateness of using broadcast television for ABE. Many of those opposed to the project as such, and some of those in favour of it, offered suggestions and criticisms concerning the detailed planning in the proposal, and these are presented in the last section of the chapter.

2.2 A QUANTITATIVE VIEW OF THE RESPONSE

There is limited value in quantifying the results of a qualitative investigation: as has been pointed out, the consultants cannot in any way be considered a formal sample. Furthermore, the variety and ambivalence of much of the comment offered is not easily reducible to figures, and less than two thirds of the consultants made use of the summary questionnaire.

The broad orientation of the full panel is analysed first, followed by the responses to the summary questionnaire. This can only be seen as a rough indication of trends, to be considered in conjunction with the analysis of the comment itself - either as qualification or as confirmation. Those who do not value this type of analysis could continue directly to the following section.

Of the full panel of 74 consultants involved, only 67 responses can be broadly classified because of the collective nature of some of the comment. Of these:

17 (25%) would like to see the project carried out very much as it is outlined in the proposal;

23 (34%) like the general idea but have reservations about its present form and/or recommend significant changes of various kinds;

7 (11%) believe that the project as it is is desirable, but that it has little chance of success in our current situation;

16 (24%) believe for various reasons that the project is neither feasible nor desirable, certainly before there have been extensive

changes in the organisation of our society and/or in the provision of ABE in South Africa;

the remaining four responses are difficult to pin down within any of these categories.

The 41 consultants who made use of the summary questionnaire are probably more positive about the television project than the panel taken as a whole. This is largely because two groups representing nine consultants who were unanimously negative about the prospects or the value of the project did not complete the questionnaire. An interesting aspect of the responses is what appears to be a more positive orientation in the answers to the questionnaire than in the comments on the text; the latter tend to present a more qualified point of view than the former.

Some striking features of the responses are the almost unanimous belief that the need to promote ABE in South Africa is urgent, the general tendency to choose the first, most positive option (within which the majority choice of the second option in question 3 stands out, namely that the limitations of television are "significant, but would not destroy the value of the project") and the relatively large response in question 8 to the effect that television should be considered in conjunction with other approaches.

The responses to the questionnaire follow. (Note that the questionnaire contained space for an individual response to each question for cases where the proferred responses were not considered adequate):

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

	N/41	%
1. The need to promote ABE in South Africa is ...		
A urgent	39	95
B moderate	1	2
C insignificant	-	-
Individual response preferring the word desirable	1	2
2. The potential of television in ABE is ...		
A impressive	23	56
B reasonable	13	32
C inconsiderable	1	2
Individual responses suggesting that the potential depends on changed circumstances or approaches.	4	10
3. The limitations of television discussed in section 6 of the preliminary report are ...		
A not serious	6	15
B significant, but would not destroy the value of the project	24	59
C not likely to be overcome, and would negate any value the project may have	1	2
Individual responses presenting various provisos	7	17
4. Were the project to be undertaken ...		
A a pilot project similar to the one suggested is essential	29	71
B a smaller study would suffice	4	10
C production should start directly, with no pilot project	-	-
Individual responses, mainly undecided between A and B	8	19
5. Were a pilot project to be undertaken, the general planning offered here would		
A be realistic ...	28	68
B need significant modification	7	17
C be unsuitable and should be handled entirely differently	1	2
Alternative approaches involving regional projects with feedback (individual responses)	3	7

6. Were the pilot project to be carried out more or less as proposed here, the staffing of the project ...		
A would be adequate	20	49
B would need some revision in detail	9	22
C should be structured quite differently	-	-
Individual responses expressing qualified views; mainly that it is likely to prove insufficient	8	19
No response	3	7
7. The cost of the pilot project is ...		
A realistic	18	44
B underestimated	5	12
C extravagant	3	7
Individual responses, indicating that they found the cost realistic but unfortunately high, or that they were not equipped to judge this point, or that the cost seemed the best that could be estimated at this stage	12	29
No response	3	7
8. Compared with the other approaches suggested in section 7 (p.16-17) of the preliminary report, the use of television in ABE in South Africa would be ...		
A highly desirable	18	44
B as worthy of consideration as the best of them	13	32
C not desirable	1	2
The suggested strategies should be undertaken simultaneously (individual responses)	6	15
No response	3	7
9. Of the broad strategies suggested in section 8 of the preliminary report (for the implementation of the project), the most suitable is ...		
A to set up an independent body	14	34
B to set up a unit within the MMF	3	7
C to give the SABC full control	4	10
Individual responses suggesting a preference for independence but stressing the need for negotiation	12	29

2.3 THE GENERAL COMMENT

(i) The problem of worker education

A number of the consultants raised fundamental questions about the nature of worker education, and specifically about the dichotomy between education and training that was touched on briefly at the beginning of the preliminary report. They felt that this dichotomy and the problems which it raised had been passed over too lightly. Other consultants posed questions about the real value of worker education and about the attitude of management to educational projects. This is no place for a comprehensive discussion of the provision of education for workers; the subject is considered in the preliminary report, and only the main points raised will be set out here.

(a) The dichotomy between education and training

The distinction which our culture generally makes between education and training is both very important and highly problematic. It is concerned with the manner in which knowledge and skills are passed on as well as the ends of this process, with the nature of the curriculum in the broadest sense and not only with the content of the process.

The mainstream of western thought on education, which one might call liberal humanist, emphasises features such as the intrinsic value of education - that education and its subject matter are ends in themselves - and the individual value of the learner, who is not a means to an end. Education is not in any narrow sense instrumental,

although some relationship is assumed to exist between education and the general good of society. In the process of education people are not formed or fitted for predetermined roles; on the contrary, their education is above all concerned with freedom, usually in the rational sense of the word, which relates to growth in insight, understanding, self-knowledge, etc. Obviously all of this is not divorced from the development of specific competencies. But the liberal humanist tradition stresses an essentialist approach to these competencies, going on the belief that they provide the specific instances of generalisable processes and procedures from which the desired qualities can be extracted and transferred to other aspects of life. In other words, we are concerned here with a developmental philosophy which sees education primarily in terms of values, of ways of understanding, seeing and being.

From this point of view training may be a good thing, it may be a necessary part of schooling, but it should on no account be confused with education. In essence training is seen to be concerned with developing or re-inforcing predictable behaviours. Its ends are limited and both subject-matter and the trainee are instrumental within the broader purposes of the institution for which training is being provided. Where in education the process is sacrosanct, in training the product is given priority. Where education is concerned with the wholeness of individual and culture, training is concerned with that fragment of an individual which will be engaged in some functional, goal-directed activity. (A brief alternative view of this critique can be found on p37 of the present report.)

This issue is of more than theoretical importance in the provision of worker education. Those who mentioned it see the need for clarity from the start about where the present project is leading. Is it genuinely concerned with education in the sense used here, or is it really concerned with training?

(b) Is ABE really needed?

The general arguments for the urgent need for adult basic education appear to be incontestable. They are based on the projected need for a larger and better-educated work-force over the coming decades and the inadequacy of the past and present provision of formal and non-formal education. Together with these economic, demographic and educational issues go a growing world-wide development in the field of adult education (and its variants such as life-long and continuing education), and the belief of South African business leadership and allied leaders in educational planning, that South Africa's productivity record is poor and that the reasons for this are primarily traceable to low levels of education or poor schooling (1).

It is the claim that education is a causal factor in development - seen in terms of economic growth and productivity - that has been subjected to scrutiny and been found wanting for some time now. Warnings against regarding adult literacy programmes in terms of economic growth have been voiced by proponents of adult education, who see the linkage of education with productivity as an extension of schooling, in the sense that it contributes to regimentation within an alienated order (2). Empirical studies have failed to show a clear link between education

and development or productivity (3) and there is no local research, as far as I know, to substantiate the strongly-held beliefs of top management on this subject. These beliefs are therefore vulnerable to the radical criticism which, baldly stated, argues that the notion that low productivity is a function of poor education is an ideological gambit which gives the appearance of rational support to discrimination. The status quo is seen in fact as denying creativity and as characterized by routine, regimentation and the creation of fragmented, de-skilled work which demands, if anything, the opposite of education (4). Research in progress gives some support to this argument. It has been shown that, in some areas at least, there is no simple relationship between education and access to employment, and that the belief of management and workers that education is important for individual or corporate advancement is contradicted in employment practices (5). It would also seem that communication, and presumably to some extent efficiency, may be more a function of distorted power relationships - expressed in terms of a predominantly top-down flow of commands - than of language and literacy skills (6).

(c) ABE - what, for whom, by whom?

Two consultants and one group were critical of the lack of clearly-defined target groups and objectives in the preliminary report. It was felt that without a greater degree of specificity on these issues it would be difficult to set about creating programmes which would lead to effective learning or the satisfaction of learning needs. Together with this went a questioning of whose needs the programme would be designed to satisfy. It would appear that the top management view is

that educational programmes which serve the system and which are concerned with integration, acculturation, improved communication and efficiency are in the general interest.* The view of more radical thinkers is that there is a conflict of interests (7). The trade unions reserve judgement about general education programmes for workers. At present their priorities lie in other spheres. They are jealous of what they see as their prerogative in terms of labour-relations education, and the suggestion that an officially-sanctioned national programme should deal with labour relations issues in the context of functional language teaching was not welcomed. One consultant believes however that it is seldom the content of worker education programmes that is at issue in the industrial situation, but the question of who sponsors and controls such programmes. Not what is taught, but who is seen to be providing the teaching, is the contentious issue (8).

As far as sponsorship is concerned, one consultant (a leader in non-formal education of moderate persuasions) made a vehement attack on the idea that sponsorship from abroad, which could be designated as funding for development, should be obtained by an organisation representing the interests of big business, and in the name of productivity and profits. A consultant in the official sector brought a different perspective to the point by saying that foreign influence would be intolerable and "could sow chaos".

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* Two responses from practitioners in industry complained of ambiguous, and indeed hypocritical, management attitudes to literacy programmes. It was implied that management, in their experience, was not seriously committed to worker education, and that corporate responsibility rhetoric was not carried through into practice in terms of understanding and support for the effort.

(ii) The problem of broadcast TV

One consultant devoted his entire response to a sustained criticism of the proposal to use television to promote ABE. His argument, based on a study of the requirements of action for social change, can be summarized as follows: There has been too little research into the actual provision of ABE in South Africa, and there is little clear evidence relating to its supposed inadequacy or to the reasons for this inadequacy. To introduce TV would be to miss several essential steps in research and development. These steps, which are fundamentally concerned with identifying problems and needs, are likely to lead to simple and effective solutions. Efforts concerned with development and change have failed because answers are sought before the necessary questions are asked. A clearly identified role should precede the prescription of a medium or a technology; the present project creates the impression of a technology in search of a role. Another consultant argued, and several implied, that a capital and technology intensive project of this nature was the last thing that was needed when so much hinged on political, organisational and human relations issues. Apart from these points there is a strand of resistance to technology among promoters of literacy, who might prefer a stick and a patch of sand to an overhead projector in what is often a Third World context. This point was stressed by one consultant who adds that while the ideas of educational technologists may individually gain our consent, in the last resort the effect of much educational technology is to turn education into "something that you do to people".

These arguments are related to two further responses. One specialist in media in non-formal education felt that the introduction of television could exacerbate a number of major problems mentioned in the preliminary report, and that it might well create further problems leading to poor motivation and ineffectual learning - especially the likelihood of TV being regarded as entertainment by learners and teachers, and the potential of TV to undermine the relationship of teacher and learner (9). Several consultants argued that no television series could meet the diversity of needs, levels and interests of adult learners.

Further reading indicated that television as a medium for specific learning was not as positively viewed as might have appeared from the literature study in the preliminary report. (See the literature study, pp.73-75, where a review of comment from Bhola, Wells and the International Council for Adult Education has been added to the original text.) While the literature reported on in the preliminary report was fairly positive, it was often thin on evaluation and seemed to suggest real value only in the area of publicity and motivation. This was supported by experience reported from abroad. Literacy Volunteers of America had used TV to publicise their work with great success, but had not used it for teaching. Literacy lessons on TV had been attempted by a Laubach programme in the late fifties, and had been heralded with much enthusiasm. However, it had failed to such an extent that the chapter on the programme in the 1960 edition of Laubach's "Toward a Literate World" has been excised from the 1984 reissue. From that experience it was argued that TV was incapable of replacing or significantly improving on the relationship with a

concerned individual teacher. One person who had worked with media in black groups felt that this criticism was of even greater importance among blacks, for whom the live encounter was thought to be generally far more real than anything which might appear on the TV screen. The argument in the preliminary report that television could be a positive force by modelling a creative relationship between teacher and learner was endorsed by some, but others believed it to be quixotic under present circumstances.

Experience in Germany and other European countries using TV in non-formal education reported by two of the consultants suggested that the effort was "not worth it". Few learners had actually gained anything from TV lessons (a 5% success rate was mentioned) and only highly sophisticated learners who were self-directed and who had very specific objectives had found television instruction really valuable. A similar impression was given by a specialist in audio-visual media in education; an extensive study of the literature on the evaluation of film and video showed what were at best ambiguous results. Where gains were reported these tended to be no greater than those obtained by improved conventional teaching methods (cf Wells in appendix, p.73). Experience at the University of the Witwatersrand, where closed circuit television has been used to cope with a large intake of first year commerce students, indicated that success was achieved only after a considerable degree of experimentation and adaptation, and that a major requirement for success was the need to build in carefully calculated opportunities for an active response on the part of the students. This requirement would be difficult to duplicate on broadcast TV, which is obviously less flexible.

The most negative point of view on the proposed project was expressed by a discussion group consisting of academics and practitioners, one of whom had had direct experience of the British TV-backed literacy campaign. Their joint opinion was that the project was neither feasible nor desirable. Apart from arguing that the reservations expressed in the preliminary report were in fact far stronger than the advantages, their major point was that the base on which a television literacy programme could be established was far too weak. They were unanimous that if such a programme were to be anything other than counter-productive, a far better developed provision of adult education was needed than was available or likely to come into existence in South Africa in the foreseeable future. Broadcast literacy programmes would require enormous inputs in terms of back-up materials, the arrangement of venues, networking and above all of the training of teacher/co-ordinators to cope with the demand that would be stimulated, as well as to avoid the raising of expectations which would otherwise be disappointed and would therefore result in a discrediting of the literacy effort. A number of other consultants felt that the demands of the back-up required were severely underestimated in the preliminary report. One consultant with extensive experience in co-ordinating public and private sector development initiatives approved of the idea of the project but believed that it had little chance of being realised because of the political/organisational problems involved.

Another criticism which was made with passion by a consultant with long experience in literacy work in the community and in industry related to the likely effect of television on the illiterate. In the preliminary report an assumption was made - too easily in retrospect - that the

British emphasis on dealing with the embarrassment of the illiterate about their illiteracy would not be a significant issue in South Africa. It was his opinion that this was a major issue. (The point was supported by observations which I made in several adult literacy situations in 1984.) Apparently there is not only a marked tendency among at least the urban illiterate to go to lengths to conceal their lack of literacy, but a sense of shame inhibits adults from enlisting at adult literacy centres. This is reinforced in industrial centres where learners of different job ranks often find themselves in the same classroom. The implication of the point is that television would draw attention to the illiterate, who would be most unlikely to hazard the exposure involved in following a course on a neighbour's set* and even less likely to follow a course at a communal viewing centre. A personal, and ideally, a one-to-one approach was clearly preferred.

The same consultant together with many others expressed the most serious reservations about the status and credibility of the SABC in the eyes of the population to be served. It was argued, in one case backed by newspaper comment, that the SABC was a major agency of propaganda for the governing party, and was intensifying that role. Thus, while people were willing to watch sport and popular programmes, the SABC was in other respects regarded with suspicion, and it would be

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* One consultant felt that while watching TV on neighbours' sets might be fairly common in Soweto, this was much less likely in other areas. The problem of access to TV, mentioned in the preliminary report, was regarded as a serious limitation by many of the consultants. Late in 1984 the SABC announced a significant extension of its network; this may lessen the problem. The idea of establishing community viewing centres was generally approved but not considered to be a likely proposition in the RSA.

difficult to persuade potential learners that the corporation would be likely to do anything in their interests. This view was not upheld by everyone, and one black consultant with centre-left leanings felt that there was little substance in it. Another referred to unpublished figures which indicated a high viewership for the SABC's social literacy programmes (discussion-documentaries on useful knowledge). However, publicly available research on the SABC and its work is so scarce that it is impossible to refute or substantiate these contentions (10).

A number of people who have worked closely with the SABC had grave doubts about the willingness of the corporation to co-operate with outside institutions, particularly non-state ones. Policy and control were felt to be exercised strictly from within, and there were serious doubts about the likelihood of getting the project off the ground. This point was hotly contested by one consultant who had nothing but praise for the SABC's new educational section and its openness to innovation and consultation from outside. This did not mean that the section would be in a position to accept outside initiatives; the general policy was to contract out projects initiated within the SABC, or to buy material offered on the open market at its own discretion.*

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* A summary of relevant points from the HSRC report on the use of radio and television in education has been added to the literature review (p.79). If the major recommendations become policy the SABC will be in full control of education broadcasting, but close co-operation with other public and private sector bodies is demanded by the recommendations.

Two consultants from the public sector clearly articulated the position that all education (as opposed to training) was, and should be, the responsibility of the state. While recognising the shortcomings of the provision of education in terms of private sector needs which were discussed in the preliminary report, they felt that it was the duty of the state to overcome these shortcomings.

2.4 COMMENT ON DETAIL

(i) General

Even when they were not positively disposed to the project as a whole, many of the consultants entered into the spirit of the planning with a sense of involvement, some of them expressing an eagerness to offer their services to the project. Much of the comment from page 54 onwards (p6 in the preliminary report) is concerned with expressing assent to points made, sometimes amplifying them. Only some of the major themes can be reported on here; the cumulative comment should, however, be of value to the director of the project, should the project be undertaken in any form.

(ii) The question of co-ordination

In the preliminary report doubt was cast on the viability of a co-ordinated national literacy effort (p54) and this doubt was used as motivation for the television project. The point gained whole-hearted consent from the left where there is resistance to any idea of a centralised state programme under the present dispensation, although

the idea of the television project was not regarded as a suitable option. Consultants from government departments also gave their approval to the point; "the stimulation of development with a minimum of centralisation" was felt to be an apt description of current policy. However, one consultant expressed strong opposition to the point, arguing that a co-ordinative effort was decidedly needed. While agreeing that centralisation was undesirable, he felt that the model of the British ALBSU (Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit) could fruitfully be followed. ALBSU is state funded but independent. It undertakes research and development, supplies materials, functions as a clearing house and maintains a constructively critical eye on adult basic education work in Britain, keeping track of developments and needs. The work itself is done largely under the aegis of local authorities, and ALBSU has no executive powers.

(iii) Video

Dr K. Baucom's reservations about the value of video in a literacy teaching context (p.58) were disputed by a number of consultants. Indeed, one suggested that the title of the report be altered to refer to video rather than to television. It was argued that development in video was rapid and that ease of operation and familiarity were growing in such a way that, it was implied, it would be retrogressive not to make use of the medium wherever possible. The work of the KwaZulu Development Corporation using video for training was said to be most positive, and another fairly large adult education project had made good use of video. (There have, however, been no formal evaluations.) Several of the consultants who did not favour the use of broadcast

television in ABE were keen that the possibilities of video be explored, although a number insisted that the medium be seen as supportive, not as the starting point or central feature of the learning process.

(iv) A regional project

Together with the recommendation of video was the suggestion that the project be undertaken much as outlined in the planning, but that it be restricted to a specific area and/or a specific population, and that attention be given to limited and specific objectives based on a thorough needs analysis. Such a project might yield material which the broadcast networks would like to buy, but that would not be its major aim, and the creation of learning packages which were supplemented by video was suggested. The use of a modular approach was supported by a number of consultants. One consultant felt that the widest variety should be aimed at.

(v) The pilot project

There was extensive support for the idea that a pilot project was essential, and with only minor additional comment the planning of the project itself was thought to provide a reasonable guide to action. However, two consultants with direct experience of television production felt that production and broadcast without a pilot project, but with careful attention to feedback, would be preferable to the planning offered. The argument that the pilot project should at the same time be the real thing, rather than a laboratory experiment, was also put forward.

On the whole the personnel planning was approved, with very divergent ideas being expressed about the salaries. Two consultants recommended that the director have experience of multi-media production (the use of the press was suggested in one case), and one that oversees experts be brought in. Two recommended that the project be run by educationists with experience in adult education to be given special training in video, rather than that television specialists run the project. There was some feeling that the staff might in reality have to be larger. The proposed review panel was slightly contentious, with some commenting on its elitist selection, and on the unlikelihood of its being in touch with the reactions or needs of the learners; broader representation of the state was also suggested.

There was little comment on the costs of the project, in spite of a general feeling that production costs were surprisingly high. One consultant took the trouble to work out that the whole project at three quarters of a million rand would generate only twelve and a quarter hours of video. The cost analysis was affirmed as adequate by consultants involved in television production, although they felt the costs might even be higher because of the experimental nature of the work. The rate is perhaps low at R1 000 per minute; the HSRC report on the use of radio and television in education implies a cost of R1 600 per minute (calculated from the figures on p9 of that report) but these presumably include broadcasting costs.

(vi) Language

Finally, while a number of consultants argued that English should be given priority, one group felt that any development without attention to vernacular literacy would be futile.

2.5 SUMMARY

A majority of the consultants were in favour of the project, (about 60%), although modifications were suggested by many. However, a number of serious problems were raised which bring uncertainty to the desirability and feasibility of the project:

The issue of the authenticity of ABE or worker education was regarded by some as a central question. Is it really education? Does the demand for it not mask more basic structural needs? Whose interests is it intended to serve and who should properly have responsibility and control? Without satisfactory answers to these questions it was not felt that any project of this kind would be adequately based.

The most pressing problems were related to broadcast TV. Serious doubts were expressed about:

- the advisability of going to technology for answers to problems which have not been properly identified or analysed.
- the efficacy of television as a teaching medium, particularly at the level of ABE.

- the strength of the base of ABE provision in South Africa, or its readiness to cope with the impact of a national TV programme.
- the political/organisational viability of the project.
- the attitude towards public TV, and particularly towards SABC-TV, of disadvantaged adult learners
- the likelihood of the SABC sharing control with non-state bodies.
- the problem of a direct role for the private sector in the provision of education.

Many consultants favoured attention to the use of video as a supportive medium in ABE rather than broadcast TV. There was reasonably general approval of the planning of the project, and especially of the need for a pilot project (preferably of a specific and regional nature).

CHAPTER 3

DISCUSSION

3.1 AN OVERVIEW

In this chapter conclusions are drawn from the findings, some suggestions for further development are made, and a brief outline of a project which the private sector might consider as a modification of the original proposal is offered.

3.2 THE FEASIBILITY OF THE PROJECT

A small majority of the consultants was in favour of the project planned in the provisional report, some with enthusiasm, some with reservations. A number of enthusiasts, presented with the major arguments against the project, felt very strongly that these were retrogressive and undermined a hopeful initiative. However, the arguments against the project are substantial and cannot be ignored. The deciding arguments, in my estimation, are those directed against the idea of a national broadcast programme, and against giving priority to technology rather than to more fundamental educational issues. The doubts which they cast over the feasibility or the desirability of what would be a decisive commitment in the provision of ABE in South Africa are such that the execution of the project in its present form cannot be recommended.

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This does not mean that there are not significant aspects of the planning which could be incorporated into a plan of action. That such action is urgently needed is clear from the unanimous endorsement of the consultants. The questions raised in the general comment above were not offered with the intention of undermining development, but of ensuring that what is done is an appropriate response to a properly identified need. The severest critics felt themselves committed to an extension of adult literacy work in South Africa. At the same time there is a prevalent feeling that adult literacy and basic education shows no signs of fulfilling the promise of the 70s, and may indeed have gone into decline. The longest established literacy organisations are facing enormous difficulties, and work in the private and public sectors is, with few exceptions, at best in a state of stagnation. This is only partly ascribable to a worsening economic climate; development is inhibited by numerous ambiguities, some of which have become apparent in the present report.

3.3 THE NEED FOR KNOWLEDGE

The need for research and development which has become more apparent than ever during this investigation. The emphasis on research might be considered to be a reflection of the writer's bias. Clearly, if there is to be progress in this field much more is needed than research. But the emphasis here is on research directed towards and rooted in practice, even where that practice is marginal. I have argued elsewhere, and much more fully, the need for research to be integrated with the practice of ABE (1); this has as much to do with the spirit in which the endeavour is approached as with rigorous professional

research methods. Among other things it would involve far more openness to public debate on the issues involved. The encouragement of this spirit and the practice in which it will be expressed is arguably the most practical action which can be taken at present.

Adult literacy and basic education efforts in South Africa have been in progress on a fairly wide - though quite inadequate - scale for over a decade. Yet it is quite evident that we are sorely ignorant about this vital endeavour. This is in part due to the small scale, the low profile and the scatter of these efforts. But it is also due to the fact that in no setting in South Africa has anything like adequate research and evaluation been undertaken. The result is that we have a greater number of people than before with experience in the field, but this experience has neither been subjected to critical examination from within the process, nor has it been made publicly available. Thus assumed failures lead to the abandonment of projects instead of their improvement, while assumed successes lead perhaps to the perpetuation of problems. Meanwhile the whole operation is clouded by the lack of any significant theoretical orientations; on the one hand submerged ideologies dominate questionable common-sense approaches, on the other ideological orientations take precedence and possibly inhibit growth.

Without a serious, no-holds-barred, and scrupulous consideration of the ends and the means of ABE and literacy work, we probably have little hope of worthwhile growth.

3.4 THREE AREAS OF INVESTIGATION

Apart from the continuing development of teaching methods and materials, which is not considered here, there are three areas in which we can gain knowledge: fundamental principles, the role and function of ABE in industry and the politics of ABE in the private sector.

(i) Research into fundamental principles

Research into fundamental questions involving ABE is clearly necessary. Serious investigation and thinking abroad have revealed theoretical and practical pitfalls in the practice of adult education (2). Obviously, some of the thinking is concerned with issues of principle which may, for example, be in conflict with the ends of capitalist enterprise as such - literacy work being characteristically concerned with social justice.

One of the most fundamental questions concerns the relationship between education and training. In the debate centring on this matter (cf 2.3 above) the most common convictions currently held must lead to a policy in which industrial training and the work situation are divorced from "education" in spite of their rich educative potential, while adult education efforts are seen by management - often for good reasons - as mere charity. There are alternative basic models for action, however. One is the idea that the idealist assumption of a separation of theory and practice implicit in this debate is detrimental to the quality of both education and training. It may indeed be descriptive of the practice, but in that case it serves to reinforce a real and

dysfunctional compartmentalisation of work, training, education and personal or communal needs. Really serious thought about issues such as this one, together with innovative practice, could lead to far-reaching change. Special attention might at least be given to the possibility of an integrated approach (3).

That this approach is obviously problematic in the work place need not discourage such attention. The whole subject is contentious and is perhaps not likely to be resolved; different and possibly irreconcileable paradigms are involved, but the encounter of conflicting viewpoints on this subject can and must be handled creatively. On the other hand, the tendency to disregard such underlying issues and to leap into action is naive. There seems to be a growing awareness that the emphasis on questions of techniques, means and methods in education as a whole is problematic, and that more attention should be given to the critical consideration of principles and ends (2).

(ii) Research into the role and function of ABE in industry

Some questions need to be investigated both theoretically and empirically, among them:

- the social role of ABE and its place in the industrial enterprise;
- the determination of needs, as well as the basic issue of needs itself - a question which slips too easily into facile calculations;
- the relationship of individual and systems needs in the ABE process - are they in conflict, and if so, can they be resolved or put to creative effect?;

- related to this, a general basis for an adaptable curriculum for education in the work place;
- the relationship of education and communications skills to productivity and "trainability"*;
- the perceived importance and value of ABE in the various social and job strata in the work place.

(iii) Research into the politics of ABE in the private sector

Research is needed into the politics of the provision of ABE in and by the private sector. What is the role of the private sector in the provision of education, and how does it relate to state and community? It has become apparent in the course of this investigation that the de Lange Commission's recommendation of a partnership of state and private sector in education has not got very far in practice, at least in adult literacy and basic education. Problems relating to this issue must be identified and brought forcefully to the attention of those in a position to bring about change. The needed research should be linked to the demands of negotiation and persuasion within the private sector, and to the process of educating management - and perhaps especially line

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* And indeed the whole issue of productivity. While there is some evidence of a relationship between language/literacy skills and productivity (3), thinking about productivity seems to be simplistic in a number of ways, from the elevation of productivity to a categorical imperative for our society to the idea that poor productivity is mainly related to the culture and education of workers - who therefore need to be conditioned and managed out of unproductive behaviours. It is gratifying to see that the latter idea has been challenged recently from the heart of the private sector (4).

management - in attitudes which may be conducive to the needed change.

An important area of concern is the overwhelmingly top-down orientation of the provision of worker education at present. For example, it is a feature of the de Lange Commission's recommendation that the authorship of change and development is largely in the hands of officialdom and management, and that the partnership does not appear to encourage a responsible role in the decision making on the part of the individual or communal clientele. This may be due to the commission's focus on formal education, but the omission of the clientele from any determining role in non-formal adult education is counter-productive. In the industrial situation there should be a decided role for the trade unions; the impasse which is evident there deserves deeper investigation. Is this not perhaps an area where management and unions could come to some form of enabling agreement, even if they cannot be seen to be working together?

An important and often neglected aspect of research and evaluation is the politics of the dissemination and implementation of findings. It was pointed out by one of the most experienced of the consultants in the course of the present investigation that a co-operative relationship between evaluator/researcher and the decision makers responsible for the funding and continued well-being of projects was vital. No matter what the credentials of the research, there was a tendency for the findings to be irrelevant to decisions without a relationship of confidence and open communication between the two parties.

While it would be inadvisable to wait for full answers to the basic questions before undertaking action, a balance must be struck between the two. The private sector could give concurrent attention to the need for basic understanding and for action conducted in a spirit of inquiry.

3.5 RESOURCES FOR RESEARCH

Apart from strictly academic research, we have an immediately available resource of knowledge in the experience of the practitioners of ABE and literacy work. This resource has as yet only been superficially exploited. Yet these practitioners are often the most aware of educationists and have much insight to share (although some need to be pushed beyond the slogans of their particular commitment). Their experience must however be probed and tested against the available evidence. One possibility here is that practitioners from relevant spheres be recruited and funded in order to allow them some obligatory respite from the urgency of their tasks, and to enable them to make sober and critical assessments of their experience and their achievement, possibly within a dialogical framework. At the same time private and public sector projects should be encouraged to publish the findings of their evaluations (in the few cases where evaluations have been undertaken and in spite of their lack of methodological adequacy). It seems most unfortunate that so little has as yet been learnt from abandoned or continuing projects, and that what may have been learnt is not available to guide new programmes. Especial attention should be given to the identification of major problems inhibiting success and development (cf. 2.3 above).

A further resource lies in the area of participant research and related research models. The special conditions of adult education have generated a variety of approaches to research in which research is thoroughly integrated into the action. With one or two exceptions, no continuing research has been done from within the provision of adult education in South Africa, leaving us dependent on overseas findings and issues which are not always relevant. What research and evaluation has been done here has invariably been done after the event, yielding unsatisfactory results; they seldom contribute to an improvement of practice.

3.6 THE ROLE OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

Organisation like the MMF could play a valuable role in terms of what has been said here. Together with the National Training Board, they are in a position to promote the broadening and deepening of essential knowledge about industrial education programmes. The possibility of promoting, funding and even themselves carrying out research projects, and particularly participant research work in this field, should not be discouraged by the findings of this investigation. A particular advantage lies in the relationship of such bodies to a large section of private enterprise, which means that they are in a good position to ensure the dissemination and implementation of the findings.

This report closes by suggesting the establishment of a research and resource centre. The alternative of concerted support for work of a similar nature within universities and other institution should not

be forgotten; ideally both the proposed centre and the academic research should receive support. The specific advantage of the centre is that it would bring together knowledge which is fragmentary at present, and which has little critical impact on work in the field.

3.7 A MODIFICATION OF THE MMF's PROPOSAL

Discussions with a number of consultants after the difficulties in the original proposal had become apparent led to the suggestion that the business sector should rather consider the establishment of a research and resource centre, possibly on the lines of the Continuing Education Project with which the Urban Foundation is currently engaged - conceivably as an extension of that project. It was felt that the planning and motivation in the present study might serve as a guide to staffing and costs, and that the following might be the broad directions:

(a) The idea of using broadcast television should be abandoned, but the promise of video should not be neglected and an exploration of the use of video as a supportive medium in industrial ABE programmes should be built into the centre's policy. Video courses could be created with broadcast quality, and could be made available to the broadcast authorities at an appropriate time.

(b) The aims of the centre would be:

(i) To identify problems and inhibitions to the development of industrial ABE programmes, to seek solutions to these problems

and to promote relevant ABE among managers and workers. At the same time the centre should promote co-ordination, or at least establish working agreements, with related concerns such as existing literacy organisations (where their services and experience are relevant), the trade union movement, the National Training Board, the Department of Education and Training and the SABC.* The primary role of the centre should be seen as facilitative; duplication of the functions of existing institutions should be avoided. These aims would best be achieved with a measure of direct involvement in one or two specific projects.

(ii) To create researched and flexible learning packages, with video backing, where this may satisfy an identified need, specifically designed for industrial ABE projects; and to guide their implementation.

(iii) To bring together information and to stimulate and conduct research in the field.

Such a centre would eliminate many of the problems mentioned in connection with the proposed project. Considering the general need endorsed by the consultants and the specific needs which arose in this investigation, it seems fair to say that the centre would be a feasible and worthwhile proposition.

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* The SABC should particularly be encouraged to give attention to publicity and motivation for ABE efforts. The value of broadcast television in this respect emerges clearly from the literature review. It is important though that such publicity should not be broadcast before the provision is adequate to the increased demand which would be stimulated.

Chapter 1

1. Problems in questionnaire research have been investigated by Dr C.S.Steenekamp of the HSRC's centre for opinion surveys. It has been found that the formulation and even the format of questions significantly affect the findings. (See Steenekamp, 1984.)

2. The theory and practice of a dialectical approach to research are discussed in various chapters of Reason and Rowan (1980). Their chapter on validity is of particular relevance to this investigation. By dialectic I mean here the critical and creative interaction of agents and ideas; in other words a partial dialectic in comparison with the dialectic expressed in the notion of praxis, where the interaction of idea and action is central.

3. Participatory research involves an attempt to combine theory and practice, and is concerned with devising ways in which the researcher, usually in collaboration with others, can both enter into the spirit of a project as an agent and yet step back from the action. Dialogue is an essential part of the endeavour. See Walters (1983) and Hall et al (1983).

4. The revisionist approach to the history of education has focussed on the role of education in a managed society, and has looked critically at the tendency towards technocracy and "technicism" in such a society. This tendency emphasises the importance of experts and has little place for the participation of the people being managed. See for example Buckland in Kallaway ed. (1984) and Karier (1973).

Chapter 2

1. Typical of this line of thought is the statement of A.M. Rosholt, in his Chairman's Statement as chairman of South Africa's largest group of companies in 1980: "I turn now to our training, which is the ultimate answer to our productivity problems. One of the commitments in the Code is the improvement of literacy and numeracy among our employees. The rationale behind this is that it is idle to talk about advancing people who are deficient in reading, writing and computational skills." See also Rosholt (1981). For a qualification of this view which takes a broader approach to the position of the black worker, considering disabling features of his social situation and not only his educational levels, see Etheredge (1984).

2. This criticism is of course most clearly articulated in the educational thought of Ivan Illich and Paulo Freire. It was built into the Declaration of Persepolis (the "charter" of the world-wide literacy movement) as a corrective to the purely functional appraoch to literacy (see French, 1982: 11).

3. For a summary of the research and thinking on this issue, see French (1982: 11-12).

4. This argument is offered in various papers in Kallaway (1984), most explicitly in Linda Chisholm's "Redefining skills" (387-409).

5. This point, and the complexity of its implications, is made in a report on work in progress to a seminar at the University of the Witwatersrand by Gilmour (1984).

6. Personal communication regarding doctoral research being conducted into language in industry in the Bloemfontein area.

7. The conflict model in labour relations is gaining greater acceptance in the business sector, and has interesting implications for the provision of education for workers which have not been adequately explored. See Douwes Dekker (1984).

8. One of the consultants pointed out that this was a clear conclusion from research into training in industry undertaken by Tony Morphet of the Centre for Extra-mural Studies, UCT.

9. The consultant who made this point referred to research conducted in American Samoa, where an ambitious project was conducted using television almost to saturation levels in formal education. The point is supported to some extent by the literature review. See especially 3 (i) in Appendix A.

10. When preparing for a conference on reading matter for the adult with little formal education I made extensive inquiries at the SABC and was able to find no published or easily accessible research which reflected on the needs and interests of black listeners, or on the nature of their response to the SABC's services. Regular market research surveys are apparently conducted but are not made available, and the only resource is the All Media and Products Survey (AMPS), which is of interest inasmuch as it indicates levels of listening, but it is concerned with who listens to what, and what products they use, and has nothing to say about attitudes. The AMPS is not freely available until some years after publication. The need for research became apparent in the HSRC report (1984). Considerably greater emphasis is being placed on research in the SABC's new educational sections; the first fruits of this new emphasis can be found in RTV 1985 (South African Broadcasting Corporation, 1985).

Chapter 3

1. See French (1985a) and (1985b).

2. Two volumes which offer American, British and European perspectives on the theory and practice of adult education relevant to this statement are Kreitlow (1981) and Thompson (1980).

3. For a discussion of the idea of, and the need for, an integrated approach to ABE in industry see Butler-Adam (1984).

4. This issue has been spelt out most clearly in terms of American educational practice, but is also of relevance here. See Graham (1984), Violas (1978) and Buckland in Kallaway (1984).

5. For an extensive review of the overseas literature on this subject see van der Vyver et al. (1983).

6. See Etheredge (1984) and note 1 to Chapter 2 above.

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APPENDIX

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF THIS PROPOSAL

1. The text has been printed on the left hand page to facilitate the writing of comments and suggestions on the right.

2. Please do not feel obliged to provide neat or definitive statements. What you write opposite the text may be as spontaneous as you choose.

3. Should you not have time to devote to the full document, you could limit your comment to areas in which you have a special interest. The text has been written with foreign readers in mind, and may therefore at times appear obvious to local readers. You could, if you prefer, concentrate only on the critical pages (6-19).

4. There is space at the end of the document for broader comment. You may, for example, wish to articulate your general impression, to point to gaps in the proposal or to suggest alternative approaches.

5. A brief questionnaire is also provided. Even if you are unable to provide extensive comment, please complete this.

6. You may prefer to record your comment on a cassette. If you do this, your recording will be copied and the original returned to you.

7. If you are in a position to organise a discussion of the proposal with associates and are able to record the discussion, this would be greatly valued.

8. Do not hesitate to contact me about any queries. You may feel that you wish to discuss the proposal with me directly. If this were the case, I would be happy to meet you - where feasible - or to return a phone call.

9. If you feel that a colleague or associate should be involved in this investigation please ask for another copy of the proposal.

10. Please return the proposal with your comments, if possible by the middle of September 1984.

11. A business reply envelope is enclosed.

Edward French

THE USE OF TELEVISION IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA
An exploration of the possibility of a major project

1. BACKGROUND

The Manpower and Management Foundation of Southern Africa is a non-profit organisation established by the private sector. Its goal is to ensure that the best use is made of South Africa's manpower resources. In the past it has been concerned largely with training in management and job-related skills. However, in 1982, motivated by a growing body of opinion that training alone is an insufficient answer to the country's manpower problems, the MMF began to explore ways in which it could promote the education of workers.

One task which it undertook was to act as a pressure group for the extension of tax concessions to cover worker education, and not only specific job training. At the same time it considered a number of options for a more direct involvement in the promotion of worker education - for example, the possibility of functioning as a co-ordinating body to supervise the private sector's funding of literacy organisations, or as a "bureau of standards" for worker education programmes. Following a series of consultations it was decided that the idea of promoting the use of television in worker education was the most promising option.

This paper has been written at the request of the Foundation as a first step in the fuller examination of this proposal. It argues the case for using television to support worker education in the broader context of adult basic education, and examines the implications of implementing such a project: this includes an estimate of the costs and a consideration of various strategies which might be designed to put the project into practice.

2. A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

The terms of reference of this study were to undertake an investigation of the feasibility of using television to promote literacy in South Africa, particularly among industrial workers. Two comments on this commission are called for:

(i) As will be seen, a project of this nature requires a considerable degree of innovation. It has great promise, but there is virtually no way of providing the empirical backing to allow one to talk of its feasibility before the pilot project recommended in this paper has been carried out. This paper should not be seen as a feasibility study, but as a contribution to the decision as to whether a full feasibility study should be entered upon or not.

(ii) The term "literacy" is misleading. It tends to be used in South Africa and abroad to signify education for adults not only in reading and writing, but in numeracy, a second language where this is needed for extended communication, and other cognitive and social attributes. Since the MMF's concern is with this broad concept of literacy, and especially with communicative competence in English, I prefer to use the term "adult basic education" (ABE). While this term does not have

the currency in South Africa which it has in the USA, it creates greater clarity about the scope of this discussion. In a recent seminar on the education of workers in South Africa we coined the expression WBE - for Workers' Basic Education - in order to provide clear parameters for the proceedings. In the present case, however, although we are concerned with a programme which may be focussed on industry, and is largely motivated by the need there, the term would be too restrictive for a programme designed to reach as many adults with inadequate formal education as possible.

3. THE NEED FOR ABE IN SOUTH AFRICA

(i) Education Levels

A detailed consideration of the complexities of interpreting adult education and literacy statistics is not in place here. The reader is referred to Ellis (1982), Terblanche et al (1984) and Wedepohl (1984).

The information provided in Appendix B clearly reveals the disparities between the adult educational levels in South Africa's major population groups. These disparities are highly significant at a time when there is a perceptible shift from race to education as a determiner of social and particularly of job mobility in South African society. Calculations from a report on the 1980 Census indicate that 5 million adults in South Africa, or 40% of the adult population over 20, and 55% of black adults, had completed less than five years of schooling. A number of reasons have led to this being regarded as a minimum requirement for basic literacy. However, Wedepohl (1984,p17) argues that if anomalies in the census are taken into account the number of functionally illiterate adults may be as high as 9 million. Even if the anomolies are not taken into account, the numbers involved increase dramatically when one raises the base line for functional literacy. For example, an adult from any population group who has only completed Standard 7, or nine years of schooling, is not likely to be able to cope with any degree of technical complexity if it requires language or reading for its mastery: because of the privileged educational setting the white in this position is probably a drop-out; the black in this position will have experienced a low quality education which he will probably have left for economic reasons. I have estimated that some 12 million adults may be in need of simplified texts if they were required to work with written information.

Although it could be expected that the level of education in an industrial context would be higher, the educational profile of economically active adults is remarkably similar to that for the population as a whole. In a broad survey of literacy in the private sector in 1980 close on 50% of the more than one million workers involved were estimated by their employers or by training managers to be insufficiently literate for the demands of their jobs and daily lives (French, 1982. Ch5). In their graph of the educational level of the labour force Terblanche et al (1983) - see Appendix B - show that the percentage of the black labour force with no qualifications in 1980 lay between 36-38%, and that a further 40% had only primary school qualifications.

(ii) The Quality of Education

Only the whites in South Africa have had compulsory education for any length of time. For the blacks education is not yet compulsory. Developments since the Soweto uprising of 1976, which was triggered by educational issues, have led to a marked increase in the attention given to black education, and in 1983 the number of black matriculants exceeded that of whites for the first time. But the quality of education remains low, with poorly qualified teachers, large classes and low per capita funding. Thus the communicative competence, even of black matriculants moving into the labour market, often leaves much to be desired; the likelihood that any instruction would have been given by mother-tongue speakers or others with a high degree of proficiency in English is negligible. Of greater concern is the drop out rate. It is probable that some 350 000 people enter the labour market every year having dropped out of school before attaining the minimum level of functional literacy.

(iii) Future Projections

In spite of the liberalising influence of a national investigation into education - "the de Lange Commission" - many of whose recommendations are currently being implemented, progress is slow in terms of the need, and even if universal compulsory education is instituted in the near future the existing deficit among adults and the difficulty of raising quality in the short term make it certain that the need for compensatory education will continue into the future. Indeed, the experience of developed countries with long histories of compulsory education suggests that this must be a permanent commmitment.

This argument is strengthened by the changes expected in the occupational structure of the work force. Lee (1983) and Terblanche et al (1983) - see Appendix C - make it clear that there is going to be a decreasing place for the unskilled labourer in the labour market and an accelerated need for skilled labour. If one adds to this the rapid rise in the population over the next decades, the stress which this will place on the provision of education and the pressure that the economy will experience in terms of job creation, then the case for the provision of ABE, rapidly, of quality and in great quantity, is statistically undeniable.

(iv) The provision of ABE in South Africa

ABE on any scale is a relatively new enterprise world-wide. However, compared with many other countries, the provision of ABE in South Africa is retarded. Promising policies for adult education after the Second World War were abandoned by the Nationalist Government and the spontaneous growth of the night school movement among blacks was suppressed or discouraged. It was only in the 1970s that the authorities began to look more positively at the need for ABE, and to encourage growth on the very slender base established by voluntary organisations and the private sector. At present a range of uncoordinated activities are being undertaken in various sectors to promote literacy and ABE. (For greater detail see French, 1982, Chapters 2 and 3, and Wedepohl, 1984, Chapter 3.) The de Lange Commission, which gave little attention to the subject, has established a Work Committee for Non-formal Education and a research project to design broad national

strategies for the provision of adult education. The President's Council's 1983 findings on the problem of population growth, in which the correlation of literacy with a decline in fertility was given prominence, has increased official interest in ABE.

In spite of what appears to be quite remarkable growth in ABE in South Africa over the past decade, the actual achievement is not impressive when set against the need. Less than one per cent of the illiterate population is reached annually by adult education, and the quality of ABE is not high. A fraction of one per cent of the national education budget is spent on ABE. Thus, while the literacy rate is rising, and is not as low as in most Third World countries, the actual number of illiterate adults in South Africa is probably increasing. In the light of the problems which I list below, and because of the loss of momentum which I perceive in most of the country's literacy and ABE efforts at present - due in part no doubt to the current recessionary conditions - I do not feel sanguine about the likelihc of meaningful development in the near future without the kind of i envisaged in this paper. The economists have promised us an economic "upturn", and although this has now been postponed, it might well be that a project planned in the near future would be welcomed if it were to be available to service a much needed surge of growth.

(v) The Private Sector and the Provision of ABE

The private sector has played an important part in the development of ABE in South Africa. It has provided much of the funding for the literacy organisations and has implemented the work of these organisations on a comparatively large scale. Possibly half of the adult literacy learners in the country are learning at centres run by the mines and large companies, the rest being found in official and voluntary centres. Over the past five years or so some of the country's major groups of companies have established ambitious projects designed to overcome the problems listed in (vi) below. Nonetheless, this commitment can be seen in the perspective of the numbers involved as a pioneering effort, not as reason for satisfaction at a task on its way to completion. However, a major recommendation of the de Lange Commission is that the state and the private sector should develop a partnership in the building of non-formal education in South Africa (Principle 7). A number of points made at two seminars which I have organised recently to look into the question of workers' education need to be noted. Recurring themes were

(a) the belief that education in industry is vital for an improvement of the country's poor productivity record. The issues involved in this belief are complex, (see French, 1982 p.11), but the concern about education and particularly about English communication is widespread. Wedepohl spells out the central features of this concern in her recent report (see Appendix D).

(b) the generally perceived importance of identifying and meeting workers' genuine learning needs, and also of a concern for the personal needs which are often best articulated in a sympathetic educational setting. The value of educational work in terms of open industrial relations was recommended.

Some members of the seminars felt strongly that the emphasis on the

raising of productivity was at odds with their values as educators. Matching this was an almost unanimous agreement among leading adult educationists of the need to educate management, and particularly middle management, about the nature of education, to get them to see its value and the differences between measuring the success of education and counting profits.

In one of the seminars it was pointed out that a certain tendency among managers to opt for training the growing number of young recruits to industry who have reasonably high qualifications, and neglecting loyal older workers with little education, was short sighted and could lead to disequilibrium if pursued on a large scale.

Dr Baucom, a leader in the provision of worker education in South Africa, suggested that within five years worker education would become a major feature of industrial development, and that a growing involvement of the labour unions could be expected and was to be encouraged. While the unions still have to clarify their stance regarding management initiated education projects, their good will is essential; apart from their ability to enhance or damage such projects, they are best placed to articulate the workers' needs. At present a major anomaly in worker education can be found in the fact that the workers are generally the last to be consulted about what they need - if they are consulted at all. This is at odds with the central principles of adult education.

At the end of the most recent and largest of the two seminars mentioned it seemed clear that there were great inadequacies in what was available as backing for worker education in South Africa. In spite of respect being expressed for the work of the small number of people involved in this field, the provision of well-founded courses or of comprehensive packages relevant to local needs was felt to leave considerable scope for development.

That there is a demand at management level for worker education emerges from my and Wedepohl's research. In my 1980 survey only 10% of the companies who responded were in fact engaged in any form of worker education, but 70% of those not undertaking such a project expressed interest in doing so. It must be remembered, however, that this response may have been affected by the boom conditions prevailing at the time. Wedepohl, in a smaller survey of larger companies in 1983 found 30% engaged in literacy projects, but possibly less positive motivation regarding development. (For details see French, 1982, Ch.5, and Wedepohl, 1984, Ch.4. In both of these surveys the need to improve productivity featured highly as motivation for worker education; concern for the worker's self-esteem was high in my survey, but Wedepohl's survey indicates a low interest in the worker's personal growth.) Adding weight to these findings is my experience over the past two months during which I have been approached by four of the country's largest employers for advice about setting up worker education projects. None of these companies has been satisfied by what is offered them, and all are willing to go to some lengths to find something which works. At the same time, I am aware of major worker education projects which are not making the progress expected, especially at lower levels such as basic literacy.

The scope for development is clear, the issues involved complex.

(vi) Problems in the Provision of ABE in South Africa

In my 1982 report I identified a number of major problems in the provision of ABE. This identification has been largely supported by Wedepohl in her more recent work. Briefly, the problems are:

(a) A seriously low level of funding and status.
(b) Very little professional backing (or middle management) for ABE efforts, and no suitable training for such personnel.
(c) Instructors with very little training.
(d) A small range of training courses of varying quality and a serious lack of suitable reading matter to supplement learning. At the same time, there is too great a reliance on materials, which are blamed for failures which lie elsewhere.
(e) Problems in motivation, including a lack of media support and the need for real opportunities for advancement after ABE.
(f) Problems in the situation of the learners, most notably the problem of the tiredness of workers which seriously affects the success of after-hours tuition.
(g) The problem of isolated and unco-ordinated efforts.

A problem which Linda Wedepohl has identified, and to which she gives emphasis, is that of the tendency to see ABE in terms of a formal schooling model. This involves an imposed and conventional curriculum, standardized forms of evaluation and an authoritarian view of the teacher's relationship to the learners. Kaye's definition of ABE in Appendix A, the writing of specialists such as Knowles (1978) and Srinavasan (1977) and much of the best thinking about the literacy process are in the strongest opposition to this tendency. Possibly related to this feature of ABE is a frequent observation of those running literacy programmes that many appointed teachers of adults operate like functionaries, lacking initiative and a sense of authentic commitment.

At the end of my report I recommended the creation of a national council to deal with these problems. After a preliminary investigation of the feasibility of such a body coming into existence I find myself unsure of the likelihood of this happening in the short term, and in some doubt - more clearly articulated by Wedepohl - of its desirability. In a small survey of top educationists I found a surprising level of interest in a national campaign, but I believe this to pose serious problem relating to the political dispensation. I have come to believe that the stimulation of development with a minimum of centralisation should be encouraged at present. This may lead to a nationally co-ordinated effort if the need is spontaneously felt by those involved.

4. THE POTENTIAL OF TELEVISION IN THE PROMOTION OF ABE IN SOUTH AFRICA

In order to keep the following argument as brief as possible, I have included a review of the literature on the subject in Appendix A.

Perhaps the most obvious advantage of television in ABE is its ability to provide publicity and motivation, to create awareness and to attribute status, more powerfully than any of the other media. This is perhaps the one unequivocal conclusion that one might draw from the experience abroad reported in Appendix A. The high profile of TV could create a national community of adult learners, and the project would stimulate so much collaboration on a practical level that the problem of co-ordination might well fall away. Undertaken in the manner suggested in this paper, it has the potential to pre-empt the problematic creation of structures from above.

Another obvious advantage is the ability of television to make rare educational talent available to a widespread body of learners, and to provide support for teachers of adults whose frequent poor preparation for the task, isolation and lack of backing have been noted. At the same time the medium is second to none in its power to reinforce teaching with a wide range of real-life situations and to provide visual and auditory stimulation and clarification in a way that the best teacher cannot achieve.

A less obvious virtue of television is its power to shape relationships and to change people's perceptions of themselves and of others. Sensitive camera work and direction in the programme could, for example, lead training managers to a finer recognition of the learners and their needs, and could educate them about the needs of an education project - an issue with profound implications. It could lead the learners to see themselves as creative individuals rather than as victims, and it could help to model the instructor's behaviour away from the prevalent empty didacticism towards a model more appropriate to effective adult education. (For this perception I am indebted to a young Johannesburg director, Elaine Proctor, whose first work in this field demonstrates some of potential of TV in this regard. A full description of the concrete possibilities of television lessons would not be in place here. Discussions with associates about ways in which such programmes might be produced have led me to believe that the opportunities provided by television are most promising. The account of the Mexican project and Williams' listing of the advantages of television at the end of Appendix A provide practical and generalised backing for this belief.

Although this statement of the advantages of using television in ABE is brief, it indicates that television could make a major contribution to the quality and quantity of ABE, and that the project could be an answer to many of the problems which face current ABE efforts or which make significant development unlikely.

5. THE UNSUITABILITY OF FOREIGN MODELS

There is no model TV-backed ABE project which could be imported for use in South Africa. This is not to say that maximum use should not be made of ideas and experience from abroad. Relatively few projects of this nature have been undertaken. The impressive work of the BBC in providing support for the adult literacy campaign of the seventies, and the BBC's work over a wide range of adult education from simple informative programmes to the Open University are directed at a population so different from that requiring ABE in South Africa that imitation would be absurd. Two reasons for saying this are the fact that the campaign was designed largely for teaching reading and writing to mother-tongue speakers of English, and the fundamental assumption that the learners would be people who had experienced failure in education and who would feel ashamed of their illiteracy. A major part of the television component was therefore directed at overcoming the shame and providing discreet access to tuition. This issue would not seem to require nearly as much attention in South Africa.

European ABE programmes in many countries have not been concerned with teaching skills directly, but have tended to be integrated with development projects and have placed emphasis on coping and access skills. While there is no doubt a need for this type of ABE in South Africa, it would not satisfy the need outlined in section 3 of this paper.

At the other extreme is the Pakistan literacy project in which TV literacy lessons were supported by extensive facilitation in an underdeveloped setting. While this project provides a more fitting example for South Africa, the nature of the need still differs considerably: the Pakistan project was concerned with mother-tongue literacy for a widespread, largely peasant, population. It would seem that our major need is for a level of ABE which focusses on the area beyond basic mother tongue literacy, and that the socio-economic conditions under which the project would be conducted would be more highly differentiated.

By far the most relevant project would seem to be the recent Mexican effort, where there are many parallels with the situation in South Africa - the language situation and the problem of rapid urbanisation and industrialisation would appear to offer decided similarities. Although problems of access (language and political) might make contact difficult, it could be that the best place to find suitable examples for South Africa would be Mexico, as well as other countries in Central and South America.

However, even in the latter case a very striking difference pertains. In all of the countries mentioned here the projects have been carried out by government agencies, and may be seen to have been conducted in terms of a socialist commitment to equality, and to the raising of the quality of life of the people for its own sake. As has been seen above in the discussion of the problem of co-ordination and of strategies for the development of ABE in South Africa, a similar kind of commitment is highly unlikely under the present dispensation, and in spite of liberalising intentions, it is difficult to foresee a radical change in this dispensation. Because of this and the other differences mentioned here, there can be no doubt that a major project using a centralised

medium but carried out under the aegis of the private sector would require extensive innovation, even were a compatible model to be available.

6. CHALLENGES IN THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

There are a number of limitations to the use of TV in ABE which must either be recognised as such, or which must be seen as providing challenges to the production team.

The first is the fact that television is essentially a supportive medium. If the learning provided is not to be impressionistic, but is to lead to a measurable acquisition of skills, it must be integrated with the provision of materials, the training of teachers and above all the facilitation of its effective use in a variety of settings. Commenting on the BBC's contribution to the literacy campaign, Rachel Jenkins - a visiting consultant in South Africa from the British Council who was intimately involved in the campaign - pointed out to the writer what she regarded as a failure in this campaign to integrate the TV programming with the realities of the tuition being offered. Of particular seriousness was the stimulation of a demand for tuition before adequate facilities were available. According to the official account of the campaign, the planners were caught out by the unexpected extent of the demand.

The need for co-ordination and facilitation in a TV-ABE project is not necessarily a disadvantage. Dr K. Baucom, in discussion with the writer, argues that this could be turned into the project's greatest virtue.

The second limitation is the restricted availability of TV. This is not a problem in the industrial sector, as few companies would be unwilling to invest in TV and video for their training centre, and no significant industrial area is out of the range of TV broadcasts. However, ABE is on the whole a service for the poorest sector of the population. Very few of the adults involved are likely to own a television set, and broadcasts do not reach many of our impoverished rural areas. In Mexico, India and Pakistan, TV-backed literacy programmes have been extended by means of community viewing centres (CVCs) supplied with state funded receivers. Bophuthatswana TV is apparently involved with the government in establishing CVCs at schools for its continuing education projet. To answer the problem of the limited coverage of the TV network the less effective but more widespread medium of radio has been incorporated in the Mexican project, while India launched a satellite-transmitted service to reach as many of its people as possible. I understand that TV reaches large numbers of people in black urban areas in South Africa on the basis of neighbourhood sharing.

A further limitation to the use of television is its relative inflexibility. Mass media-supported ABE is a form of distance teaching: it has been pointed out that the rigid programming necessitated by broadcasting goes against the flexibility which is one of distance teaching's greatest advantages (Townsend Coles, 1982, p115). Adults seldom have free use of their time, and both in industrial and in rural literacy projects - for different reasons -

irregular learner availability creates a recurrent problem. This problem is likely to be worsened by the use of television unless appropriate counter strategies are devised. Repeating the programmes at different times, optimal selection of transmission times, the inclusion of a generous amount of redundancy in lessons, and the design of modules which are reasonably independent of one another are policies which could help here.

In the original thinking of the MMF on this project it was proposed that the programmes be free of copyright, with users being invited to copy them and use them at their convenience; it was also suggested that the programmes be marketed in video packages in addition to being broadcast. Dr Baucom, who has made use of a CCTV English course in a major mining company, has serious reservations about the value of the latter suggestion. In his experience the complexity and paraphernalia involved in running a course like this has created resistance on the part of trainers. There may be an answer to this problem in the creation of a comprehensive design for simple management and handling, but there is no doubt that the sense of being overwhelmed by inappropriate and alienating hardware would work against the central principles of ABE.

This brings me to what I see as the greatest challenge in using television as a teaching medium in ABE, and not just to provide publicity and motivation. There is a serious danger that television courses would provide the greatest possible source of imposed authority on teachers and students who already experience difficulty in expressing or developing their autonomy. This would exacerbate the problems already mentioned: the lack of commitment and initiative on the part of the teachers, the materials orientation, the use of a formal schooling model for interaction in adult education, the failure to respond to real needs. Moreover, TV could intervene between the teacher and the learner, limiting the growth of personal confidence and competence which is one of the most important outcomes of successful ABE and which depends in large measure on the relationship of the learner with an enabling teacher. The centralised and authoritative voice of television make this a very real problem.

However, as I have pointed out, television could have the very opposite effect. This would depend on the quality of programme design and direction, and on the extent to which sensitive experimentation is built into the execution of the project. The latter proviso is most important; the British experience suggests that even design by experienced experts can lead to programmes which alienate the learners, and that regular evaluation of reception is needed. In any project of this kind it may be advisable that the sponsors make it mandatory that these potential ill-effects be counteracted. The fundamental aim of ABE - to extend the autonomy of the learners - should provide a touchstone for content, methods and style of presentation at all points in the programme. Attention should be given to the creation of machinery to ensure that such a provision be more than wishful thinking.

If the challenges listed here are met they could enhance the considerable potential of the medium. As in most things, the value of television in the promotion of ABE would depend on the quality of the total production. There are many facets to the challenge, ranging from

imagination in the conception to rigorous experimentation and sensitive integration into the learning situation. Perhaps the most important proviso is that the special qualities of television should be fully exploited. The television component could be an expensive fetish if it were treated as an appendage to the course material, or as an extension of conventional didactic models. Innovation is required in the whole programme design, and would demand team work in which real knowledge of the medium - not just technical expertise - and knowledge of the demands of ABE were fused. This knowledge would have to include a willingness to explore and adapt to the response of the target population to the conventions of the medium. A special sophistication is required, a sophistication free of self indulgence or commercial slickness and tailored to the needs of the learners and their situation. A project to promote ABE using television would have to be undertaken with a commitment to an excellence appropriate to the context, or it should not be undertaken at all.

7. IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROJECT

In the light of what has been said above I would argue that an extensive pilot project is required before any thought can be given to a full TV-backed ABE programme. Although similar projects elsewhere have been put into action after relatively little research, with the emphasis being placed on continuing feedback and concurrent evaluation, I believe that this would not be appropriate here. In the first place there is the uniquely complex social and political context already referred to. This makes peculiarly taxing demands, particularly in terms of the final implementation of the programme, and the varied developmental levels of the population to be served by the programme make the definition of precise priorities difficult at this stage.

The specific brief of this paper, in which the development of communicative competence in English in industry has been emphasized, lessens the problem somewhat, as it prescribes the central focus. A more important consideration is the danger that a programme which is inadequately prepared and poorly integrated might discredit ABE in a situation where much of the work being done is based on threadbare assumptions largely unsupported by empirical findings. Markle and Markle (1975), discussing the potential and limitations of television in literacy programmes, insist on the need for experimentation. At the same time, the controversial evaluation of "Sesame Street" indicates that the evaluation process itself demands a high level of sophistication. A lesson from many literacy programmes around the world seems to me to be that they are seldom preceded by an adequate experimental or pilot phase because of the pressure for quick results in response to an urgent problem. As a result their quality, credibility and success are reduced.

Apart from overcoming this failing, a pilot project could set the stage for the full project to be conducted in a spirit of enquiry, something which would produce results of interest to the developing world as a whole. And although research should in no way be subordinated to the demands of production, the project should bring into being an valuable initial stock of key modules.

I suggest therefore that the immediate need is for funding for a pilot

project. In order to assess the finance which might be required I have found it necessary to spell out the implications of such a project in terms of staffing and stages of development in some detail:

(i) STAFFING

a. Permanent

DIRECTOR or team leader. Qualities required: Interest in and commitment to the task; executive ability; ability to contact, negotiate with and reconcile a variety of institutions with potentially conflicting demands; creativity plus strong critical faculty; knowledge of ABE; sensitivity to the nature of the medium.

ASSISTANT or "runner'. Qualities required: Interest in and commitment to the task; administrative ability; energy; an ability to interact with the director creatively and intelligently; preferably relevant experience.

b. Contractual

Professional script writers and production teams to be employed on a commercial basis.

Specialist consultants in second language and literacy teaching (ad hoc).

Three course writers for the major experimental modules.

An evaluation specialist with two assistants, possibly students.

c. Ex officio

REVIEW PANEL to meet roughly six monthly or four times over the course of the project and consisting of the following:

The project director; representatives of the sponsors, the MMF, the SABC, a relevant education department and/or the Department of Manpower, industrial training or personnel management; PLUS a disinterested television specialist, an authority in the field of ABE and a spokesman for the learner community.

d. Implementation

INSTRUCTORS to be co-opted from existing projects to implement the experimental modules.

e. Infrastructure

SECRETARIAL assistance, where necessary to be obtained on an ad hoc basis or to be supplied by the institution housing the project.

(ii) THE POSSIBLE COURSE OF THE PROJECT

I see the project as involving two broad phases. In the first the director and his assistant would be fundamentally concerned with familiarizing themselves with the resources for the project, gaining insight into its possibilities and pitfalls and developing relevant expertise. The second phase would involve the execution of a full experimental programme based on the experience gained in the first phase. Obviously the detailed steps which I list here are intended to provide a concrete idea of the reality of the project. They are in no sense prescriptive. The planning centres on the activities of the director.

FIRST PHASE

MONTHS 1 and 2

Literature study, survey of resources, planning and organisation of an overseas study tour, appointment of a script writer and production team for the trial module, recruitment and calling of first review committee.

MONTH 3

Overseas study tour. (Officials of the SABC who have been on a recent study tour of overseas educational TV regard this as sine qua non for anyone taking the endeavour seriously. Because of the enriching value of a dual perspective I would suggest that the director be accompanied by the assistant, who could also help in the organisational aspects of what would be an very demanding schedule.)

MONTH 4

Compilation of a report and broad planning of the trial module - a short set of TV-based instruction with limited objectives, using a range of the techniques envisaged and brief enough to provide rapid feedback. Convening of first review panel to assess these.

MONTH 5

Team work with script writer and producer on the detail design of the trial module. Initial work of the evaluation team on evaluation design.

MONTHS 6 and 7

Production of trial module, writing and printing of materials and guidelines for teacher training, planning and organisation of implementation and evaluation. Possible trial tests of viewer response to television component without actual instruction.

MONTHS 8 and 9

Training of selected instructor(s) and implementation of trial module in a small range of settings (using video, possibly in the form of a mock transmission). Evaluation. Remakes and re-runs may be necessary depending on learner response. Close co-ordination between director,

producer, and the evaluation team.

MONTH 10

Compilation of evaluation report and recommendations for further development. Convening of second review panel, and progress report to sponsors.

End of first phase

SECOND PHASE

MONTH 11

Consolidation of models for design, implementation and evaluation. Detailed planning of full project. Call for tenders for production, and recruitment of course writers.

MONTH 12

Leave

MONTH 13

Appointment of course compilers (possibly for three full modules to cover aspects of the major areas of literacy, English in the work place and English communication for life skills and industrial relations). Commencement of course compilation, evaluation and acceptance of tenders, preferably from more than one company to provide comparable results.

MONTH 14

Course compilation and scripting. Refinement of evaluation design.

MONTHS 15, 16 and 17

Production, small-scale trial tests of viewer response, possible remakes. Organisation of major implementation. Writing of interim report and convening of third review panel. Printing of materials and revision of teacher training guides.

MONTHS 18, 19 and 20

Teacher training, implementation, evaluation and remakes where necessary. Initial outline of strategies for a possible full project.

MONTHS 21, 22 and 23

Completion of full evaluation report and recommendations for action on a national scale. Review panel to estimate feasibility. Report to sponsors. If feasibility is agreed, implementation of strategies to obtain continued backing for the project.

MONTH 24: Leave

(iii) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Permanent Staff Over Two Years	R	R
Director's salary	70 000	
Assistant's salary	30 000	
+ 10% (Pension, medical)	11 000	
Infrastructural backing	40 000	
		151 000 *
Overseas study tour 2x	10 000	20 000
Consultancy fees for SL and literacy specialists		10 000
Course compilers' fee		
3 x 10 lessons x 5 pages		
@ R50 per page		7 500
Production costs		
Trial module:		
5 programmes av. 15 mins:		
75 mins @ R1000 per min: 75 000		
Major run		
3 x 10 programmes av. 15 mins:		
450 mins @ R1000 per min R450 000		
		525 000
Evaluation team		
Specialist: 100 days @ R200 per day R20 000		
2 Assistants: 40 days @ R100 per		
day each R 8 000		
		28 000
Convening of review panels		
10 members x 4 sessions x R100 per session		4 000
Printing/copying of materials		
200 pages x 15 learners x 5 sessions:		
15 000 @ 10c per page		1 500
TOTAL		747 000

CLARIFICATION

- The costing was worked out in consultation with a highly qualified chartered accountant.

- Staffing costs have been estimated roughly according to current academic salaries. To provide a reasonable margin an upper range has been quoted.

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* On an alternative reckoning using a base of R200 and R100 per day respectively for 490 working days this works out at R133 000.

- The cost of television production is also in the upper range. On the advice of two companies it has been established that while a simple and relatively amateur programme could be produced for as little as R300 per minute, the lowest cost for a professional production is about R600 per minute. Since the production involved here would demand intensive evaluation and re-runs, and may require the payment of "actors" over a period of time and under circumstances which are difficult to predict, it seems reasonable to quote R1000 per minute.

- Other costs have been estimated on the basis of current HSRC budgeting policy and on the advice of an independent accountant.

(iv) A NOTE ON THE POSSIBLE COSTS OF A FULL PROGRAMME

The pilot project is approximately one tenth of the length of a full programme. Although the cost of the pilot project is proportionately greater in terms of its experimental design, the cost of the full programme is likely to be of the same order: in the first place, I would recommend that the full project continue to be developed in a spirit of inquiry; secondly the greatest costs in the experimental programme are those linked to production, and while these may drop because there will be less experimentation, other costs involved in broadcasting, the production of materials on a large scale, training, and facilitation, and in the broader publicity for the programme, would at least make up for these. Thus it may be reasonable as a very rough estimate to expect a cost of the order of R7,5 million at current value.

As Rafe-Uz-Zaman points out (see Appendix A), the use of television must reach relatively large numbers of learners to justify its high cost. In the present case, if the costing is realistic and if television were to reach and effectively teach 500 000 learners (only one in ten of the country's adults with little or no formal education), the cost of the television component would be R15,00 per learner. This does not of course include the cost of employing instructors, providing venues, offering work time for learning or buying additional course material.

Even if large numbers are involved, television-based learning remains an expensive approach. The costs of literacy and adult education programmes in South Africa are difficult to estimate or to compare. However, it is likely that an amount of R7,5 million exceeds or equals the annual adult education budgets of a number of the country's major corporations, as well as that of the Department of Education and Training. The literacy organisations themselves run on slender budgets. For example, the Bureau of Literacy and Literature had running costs of R161 000 for the financial year 1982-83. For this it employed three professional and four clerical/technical staff members, ran various instructor training courses and supplied 80 000 course books to an indeterminate number of learners (each course has three or four books), but was unable to put resources into expansion or development. For R7,5 million the Bureau could run for ten years at three or four times its present size. Whether this comparison is at all relevant is a moot point.

Some developments which could either be seen as alternatives to

television or as having priority over television might be:

- A massively increased funding of the existing literacy organisations.
- The conducting of a "saturation" worker education project in one area.
- The establishment of a National Institute for Adult (Basic) Education.
- The creation of a large bureau within the MMF for the stimulation and promotion of worker education.
- The provision of substantial backing for a popular national literacy campaign.

The extended debate which could undoubtedly be conducted around these alternatives cannot be entered into here. One argument needs mentioning, however: The prevailing orientation of educational thinking in official and private sector circles and among those here and abroad who have the resources to fund an impressive boost to ABE in South Africa would seem to involve a high level of faith in technological approaches. However much this orientation may be open to criticism, there can be little doubt that television is more likely than any of the alternatives suggested here to capture the imagination and the support of the powerful.

8. POSSIBLE BROAD STRATEGIES

Two related issues remain to be discussed. These are the broad organisational structure of the project - specifically how it would fit in with the institutions which would inevitably be involved - and the question of accountability.

The likelihood of conflicting approaches to the project cannot be overlooked. The sponsors, and those directly involved in the project, will probably be concerned about the broad social implications of the project, and will expect some liberalizing intention to be realized in it. Top management, including the MMF, are likely to see the project in terms of the raising of productivity. The official sector, whose approval and support of the project is essential, would see the project in terms of national development, but may have problems concerning their degree of control over its nature; the focus on English may for example be unacceptable*, and an open approach to labour relations may cause resistance. (Recent developments give some reason for optimism in this repect, however. A greater problem may well be the conservatism and the short-term productivity orientation of middle management, since they have the power to undermine the project in practice.)

Multiple accountability could paralyse work on the project, and it would be advisable to clarify the structure of accountability in

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* The language of the project is problematic. Schuring (1981) found that while English has the greatest status among blacks, Afrikaans was more commonly used in the work place. Wedepohl and I found that management place the greatest stress on English communication, but Wedepohl reports at least one local union which is pressing for the use of an African language at work.

advance. The following are a number of possible approaches:

(i) The funding raised by the MMF could be used as a direct grant to the SABC, who would be accountable to the sponsors only in the sense that the designated project would be carried out. This simplifies matters: any anxiety about the ultimate implementation is eliminated, and the existence of an impressive infrastructure for research, development and production could be a boost to the project. On the other hand, a sponsor, particularly abroad, might have serious reservations about providing a direct subsidy for an organisation which holds a powerful monopoly over communications, and whose support for Nationalist policies is generally recognized.

(ii) The MMF could house the project and might manage the links with the various parties involved. Whether this is feasible would depend on the policy and commitments of the MMF. This would make use of an established infrastructure and would leave the project director free from certain aspects of the negotiations required.

(iii) An independent project could be established, accountable to the sponsors.* The greatest virtue of this approach is political. While the good will of a range of institutions must be maintained, it is clear that the interests and the good will of the people most directly concerned in the project - the vast population of adults/workers with little formal education - are essential for the long-term prosperity of the project. It may therefore not be desirable that the project be too closely associated with the official sector or with management. This is particularly important in the light of the growing strength of labour unions in South Africa and of the increasing political awareness of the disenfranchised population as a whole.

Were the independence of the project to be taken seriously it could theoretically operate without reference to the institutions I have mentioned. In this case the whole question of the marketing of the full programme would depend on the SABC's willingness to buy the product. There are alternative possibilities. The increasing use of video would make the idea of an independent package attractive were it not for Dr Baucom's experience mentioned earlier. At the same time the existence of Bophuthatswana TV provides another - although regionally limited - potential outlet. Furthermore, there may be a market for the package further afield in Africa.

9. THE QUESTION OF THE FULL PROJECT

A problem is created by the uncertainty of continuity in any such project. This especially affects the permanent staff. It may be difficult to appoint a director with the appropriate qualities to a post of such impermanence. The problem would be resolved if the

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* Were the sponsorship to come from abroad it may be advisable to appoint a local body, such as the committee which oversees the implementation of the Sullivan Code, to act as a proxy for the sponsor. Provision for such a policy is made in the design of the Review Panel for the project.

director were seconded from an existing post, or if option (i) above were to be accepted, in which case a permanent post may be created by the SABC. On the other hand the uncertainty may be considered as a motivating factor.

Another problem is that of the funding of the full project. The sponsor might be asked to guarantee the continued funding conditional on the results of the evaluation of the project being positive. Whether any sponsor would accept such a long-term commitment is open to question. Other avenues could be explored. Apart from the possibility that the project will be marketable there is the option that the full programme be sponsored by a variety of local companies with a direct interest in particular modules. For example, a module on the basic language and concepts involved in understanding and working with electricity may be sponsored by an electrical company, who could also supply technical backing, a context, information and material, and who would then receive publicity in return for their beneficence.

10. CONCLUSION

In 1983 the newly-established educational TV unit of the SABC enthusiastically initiated a project to teach adult literacy. The tender of the television unit of the University of the Witwatersrand was accepted, but both the SABC's and the University's teams rapidly came to the conclusion that the project was not feasible. They realized its implications in terms of co-ordinating a total effort which would have gone far beyond their resources or their expertise. At the same time they found themselves in some doubt about what precisely was needed. These doubts were confirmed by the SABC team's study tour to investigate educational TV abroad, and after much negotiation it was decided to convert the project into a series of "Community literacy" programmes dealing with issues such as consumer awareness, health and elementary civil rights. This series has been broadcast and a second series to create an awareness of the role of parents in the education of their children is in production.

While the SABC team would like to see something being done about a full TV ABE programme they recognize that it is well beyond their resources, especially in the light of current cash flow problems.

Considering this situation, as well as a certain sense of discouragement and inadequacy in the literacy and ABE movement in South Africa, I believe that the time may be ripe for the setting up of a project like the one outlined here.

APPENDIX A

EXPERIENCE ABROAD IN THE USE OF TELEVISION IN ABE:

A Literature Review

A computer search for literature on the use of television in adult education has yielded only a small stock of books and articles. Radio has been used for education in developed countries since the inception of public broadcasting in the 1920s, and has found widespread use in adult education in the developing world; this has included its use as a supportive medium in literacy campaigns, where it has supplied motivation, information and even tuition. As will be seen, it has also been used to supplement television-based literacy programmes in Britain and Mexico. Thus there is a relatively large supply of information on radio which is not considered here. The lack of information on television in ABE reflects the youth of ABE and of television, as well as the limitations of television in ABE, such as cost and availability to the disadvantaged groups for whom ABE is designed.

1. EUROPE

(i) General

Three members of the SABC's team concerned with developing educational TV returned from a study tour to Israel, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK in 1983 with a profound impression of the scope for educational TV in South Africa. They brought back with them scores of pamphlets, booklets and programme guides which collectively indicate an impressive commitment in the countries visited to using television in support of education.

Overall, these documents reveal the extent of research and development which goes into this endeavour, with large institutions handsomely funded and staffed to provide the services needed. Another feature is the amount of attention given to published information; this ranges from histories of the organisations to teachers' notes to accompany broadcast lessons. However, very little can be said to be done in terms of ABE. The majority of programmes are directed at schools, at higher academic study or at general programmes of academic interest. The idea of the open university seems to lie behind much of the programming, even where the institution does not yet exist. Programmes about understanding computers seem to be especially popular currently. (A fuller report on the observations of the SABC teams study tour can be found in Erasmus et al -1983).

The attention given to ABE in Europe is reflected more thoroughly in Kaye and Harry, eds (1982), Using the media for adult basic education. This is a very useful text which should be a handbook for anyone working closely in the field. It consists of a series of papers, each one focussing on an ABE programme in one European country.

In his opening chapter, Kaye offers one of the best definitions of ABE

which I have seen. After pointing out that ABE is not concerned with academic education, or with the kind of education which is a "second chance" route to upwards mobility, he continues:

"The notion of adult basic education should encompass that of education for, and by, the groups involved - not merely the opening of new channels of access to a form of knowledge and culture designed by the privileged groups in society for those of a less privileged status, but the encouragement of the less privileged to 'produce for themselves the knowledge and skills which they need in their struggle'. Thus, in a wider sense, adult basic education should encompass not only the development of a 'toolkit' of social skills, but also the application of the tools to the acquisition, use, and production of relevant and useful knowledge which can help to bring about changes in society itself" (p9).

Kaye breaks this generalisation down into a number of specific applications: functional literacy and numeracy skills, social coping skills, and other themes from consumer education to preparation for vocational and professional training. Later, discussing the disadvantaged communities which are the target of these programmes, he points out that "the little that is available for adult education provision tends, in many European countries, to be directed towards professional and other job-related training linked to the needs of the production system" (p15). Reflections such as these should put the European view of ABE into perspective and may cause one to ask whether the ruling community in South Africa is ready to allow this kind of education on a large scale.

Kaye continues with an outline of broad approaches to ABE, from which he moves to the advantages of broadcasting, "which can be demonstrably effective in modifying people's behaviour and attitudes" (p16) He points to the obvious advantages, but adds that the greatest may be the ability to "stimulate the viewers and listeners, and develop their motivation and confidence to a point at which they want to start a learning project or embark on a course of action" (p19). The focus of the book is not on the one-off campaign approach to ABE, but on the type of project which uses "the different media in varying 'mixes' or combinations ... (an) integrated use of broadcasting, distance and self-study methods, and local resources"(p20). The chapter is concluded with a five-page "Checklist of important points concerning the use of multi-media methods for adult basic education" (pp24-29). This is undoubtedly the most valuable part of the book in practical terms. It covers general issues, needs-analysis, media and methods, materials creation and production, working methods and evaluation. These headings, plus the provision of support for the learners, provide the major guidelines for the other articles in the book.

(ii) France

The French ABE programme "Tele-Promotion Rurale" (Ch2) could be described as an agricultural extension programme. This multi-media production underwent various changes as a result of continuing evaluation. Interesting shifts in the course of development were
(a) from documentary programmes to "fictions" in which members of the target population themselves enacted the theme; this enhanced interest and participation (p42), and

(b) from distribution of published materials through animateurs (local agents) to direct distribution through the agricultural press (p49).

(iii) Denmark

Chapter 6 deals with the programme "Danish for Adults". As in all of the reports in this book, the complexity of the total operation is clear. Two feature can be mentioned here. The programme was the most academically conservative of those reported in the book. The conservatism arose from the submission of the working party which planned the project to the insistence of the minister of education on a course with limited admission requirements which would be directed towards the certification of formal qualifications (p147). A negative effect of this policy was that "genuine concern on the part of teachers that their students should pass the examinations often overshadowed the felt communicative needs of the students themselves" (p157). Secondly, evaluation led to the conclusion that television was good as a recruiting medium, but less effective at imparting subject content (p175).

The programme was conducted on radio as well as through TV and published texts. Video and audio cassettes were also used, but problems were experienced in their distribution; these seem to have been caused by the rigid time-tabling of the programme (p163). The evaluation team recommended the development of "a more functional course in smaller modules" as the existing course did not appeal to the broad target group of the educationally deprived (p175). The author draws attention to the fact that "co-operative ventures of this kind have a considerable lead-in time, during which the partners themselves undergo changes in response to variations in the political, economic and social climate" (p148).

(iv) The Netherlands

The report on "Open School Nederlands" (Ch7) uses a different format from the other reports, throwing the emphasis onto the analytical procedures at each stage of the task. The degree of problematizing makes this report a useful model for the planning stages of a similar project. The programme was directed at "those groups whose chances of profiting from existing educational provision had been minimal" (Roughly, those with between 5-8 years of formal education, p183.) The areas of study were similar to those in the British Community Education Project discussed below. Comment on the initial programmes deserves full quotation: "The full potential of the media was not exploited in the first radio and television programmes, and there were additional problems:

- Many of the television programmes were pitched at too high a level
- Programmes were presented according to a strict schedule requiring sequential study. To be able to understand lesson 8 it was essential to have previously mastered, for example, lesson 5 or 6 or 7, or perhaps all of them.
- Transmission time was 6.00 pm or 6.30 pm. This is one of the busiest times for many of the female students with families.
- There was an inbuilt contradiction in the functioning of two separate parts of the system. On the one hand a strong emphasis was placed on the importance of students or groups of students being able to decide for themselves how quickly they wished to learn. On the

other hand, the use of the open broadcasting network requires adherence to a strict time schedule. Decisions made by the groups always took precedence over pre-conceived attempts to integrate the different media"(pp189 -190). The meticulous attention to student needs and experience, and to the articulation of these needs, is stressed in this paper even more strongly than elsewhere.

Started in 1977, the Dutch programme was developed on the basis of a three year pilot project. The television component consisted of 26 hour-long programmes broadcast on Sunday afternoons preceding a weekly family feature, and repeated on Wednesday mornings. The subjects were Dutch (15mins), a topical theme (25mins), and educational opportunities (5mins). It was found that the medium was unsatisfactory for mathematics and arithmetic, and this component was replaced by 15 minutes on political awareness and justice. The programmes were judged to be a popular success according to viewing figures. Particularly successful, however, was an internationally-produced English course which was broadcast separately from the main project.

(v) The United Kingdom

The British programme "Just the Job" was aimed at helping young unemployed adults to find suitable work. Although of little relevance to the present study, its careful evaluation would seem to indicate that the main function of TV in this context was not in transmitting content, but as a referral agency which helped to make the more motivated young unemployed aware of the counselling services available to them (p75).

A second British ABE project is the Open University Community Education Programme (Ch4), "concerned with the learning of adults in their roles as parent, consumer, employee and citizen"(p86). Key concepts in this programme were awareness, dialogue, information, personal and collective decision-making, and the enabling of action for change. While this programme is of limited relevance to the present project, the detailed discussion of its design and implementation, and particularly of its needs analysis, the development of materials and the enrolment and support of students, deserves attention. Also of interest is the description of organisation, staffing and costs.

The project used the Open University's impressive facilities, but had its own word processor, printing facilities and a specialist library. In 1981 there were 27 staff members, more than half of them on short term contracts and including 7 secretarial and clerical staff. Resources were extended by access to a wide range of academic research and technical staff on the university's main campus. Over one third of the funding came from grants, the rest from student fees, and in 1981 the total estimated expenditure was £430 000 (p112). This does not appear to include the television production costs, as the TV component was handled by the BBC.

What emerges most clearly from this report once again is the complex interaction of a wide range of processes in order to achieve success.

The British Adult Literacy Campaign of the 1970s is undoubtedly the best known of the programmes handled in this book (Ch5). The report on it is written by Jones and Charnley, two leading British authorities on

adult literacy, and is arguably the most thorough in terms of the depth of understanding and the degree of research experience which it reflects. This makes it difficult to summarize adequately, and only a few perceptions can be mentioned here. The major impact of television was seen to be in the areas of recruitment of learners and of volunteer teachers, and in the creation of public awareness of the problem of illiteracy, and of the campaign. The burden of development lay in the provision of materials and training for volunteer tutors, largely by agencies other than the BBC, but in close collaboration with the BBC; some training for tutors was presented on radio programmes. Because of "the nature of the students' needs and the sensitivity of their attitude to formal education", the more prescriptive forms of distance teaching were found to be unsuitable (p127) - the authors argue that this is one of the most important lessons of the project. As the programme progressed the emphasis on materials development shifted from a faith in audio-visual aids to a greater production of readers of appropriate levels (p131). A central emerging concern of the programme was the development of the learners' confidence; this was fostered mainly by the interaction of tutors and individual learners on an individual basis (p137), and by the distribution of relevant reading matter, but the television component was also profoundly conditioned by the determination to encourage confidence and open access.

The cost of the whole campaign was some £9 million for England and Wales. This works out at £50 per registered student per year. "No other sectors of education can show cost-effectiveness of that order", claim the authors (p143). The BBC's contribution was supportive and relatively small, but was at the same time central. It was funded by a Ford Foundation grant; broadcasting costs over three years were £1 024 200 - presumably including production costs. Commenting on this contribution, the authors write, "Without the BBC's initial decision to move into this field, little of the provision made by either central or local authorities would have happened and adult literacy could well have remained a tiny minority concern of a handful of voluntary bodies" (p117) - much as it is in South Africa!

The BBC's contribution to the Adult Literacy Campaign is documented in detail in a 255 page report to the Ford Foundation, Adult literacy and broadcasting: the BBC's experience (Hargreaves, 1980).

Much of this book is devoted to a day-to-day account of the running of the project, and to examples of the materials developed, including outlines of the broadcast programmes. As such, it is useful for someone directly involved in such a project, but of less interest from our present perspective. Two features of the programme have been mentioned in my main text: the unforeseen reaction of the target group to certain programme presentations and the unexpectedly large response before the whole system was ready to deal with it. The greatest interest is provided by the author's setting out of "lines of thought ... from our experience which may have relevance to other societies" (pp144-148). Among the more relevant of these are:

- Broadcasters find themselves in an uncomfortable position, under pressure from the highly educated and politically committed proponents of ABE, and required to make "stark choices about priorities in adult education" because of limited resources. This is regarded as a problem particularly of developed societies in which new needs are constantly emerging.

- The range of collaboration and initiatives required by social action programmes strain "the traditional definitions of our role" as broadcasters.
- The need to meet adult learners "where they are" demands styles of broadcasting "significantly different from the traditional forms in which educational broadcasting has operated."
- It is supremely important to consult and listen to those for whom the programmes are designed.
- Feedback and audience reactions should be used to shape future programmes; to facilitate this, production close to broadcast times is recommended.
- An oblique approach to the subject of illiteracy is needed to avoid embarrassing the target viewers when they are likely to be watching with other non-learners.
- The three year burst of synchronized effort stimulated by the project was of real value.

2. OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

While some information has been obtained about TV-based adult education in the USA and Japan, it would appear that the experience is less extensive in this field than in Europe, and that very little,if any of it is concerned with ABE. Markle and Markle (1979), offer a generalised discussion of "The role of television in literacy programmes" from an American perspective; this is focussed largely on the potential of the medium. It is possible that the extensive attention given to compensatory programmes for younger people in the United States could offer much of interest to the development of TV-based instruction for the educationally disadvantaged in South Africa.

3. THE THIRD WORLD

(i) General

While the specific case studies reported in this section are reasonably positive about the prospects of television in ABE, the general studies are less so.

In his detailed review of "Instructional technology in development", Wells (1976) concludes with a very qualified view of the value of television. "There have been numerous studies comparing instructional technologies with traditional instruction. After carefully reviewing many of these studies, it is not possible to reach a firm conclusion regarding a superior choice. One conclusion, however, is clear from the research: improvements in the pedagogical quality of educational materials improve the effectiveness of the program. While students apparently can learn from any medium, they learn more when the programs are carefully planned according to principles of good teaching. However this does not imply that expensive, technically sophisticated production is superior" (p159-160). "There is no evidence to believe that a technology system will be more or less successful than a traditional system in reducing dropout or repetition rates. There is also no evidence in reducing illiteracy rates" (p157). On the other hand he points out that "one must bear in mind that the evaluation studies that generally reveal no significant differences between

conventional and technology-based instruction on cognitive criteria are often conducted when technology is substituted for some other resource" (p161). (Wells presumably means that it may be more effective if it used in a supplementary role.)

Specific disadvantages of high technology are the increase in centralised authority (p156), the fact that "teachers often view technology as displacing them and reducing their control in the classroom" (p157), the reduction of students to a passive role (p160) and the general problem of systems malfunctioning (p160). Nonetheless Wells clearly sees value in broadcast technology, particularly in coping with staffing shortfalls and in reducing the disparity between rural and urban educational levels. He is particularly informative on the numerous decisions that have to take place at various levels - from political to economic and educational - in implementing high technology educational systems. He would seem to favour the location of the system within the ministry of education (p158), and the use of an incremental implementation (p162). The latter means developing the system from a specific geographical area, or from a particular grade level, and is an alternative either to a massive implementation or to the pilot study approach. He is also insistent on the importance of evaluation in order to monitor the system (p162) and believes that teachers should be consulted in the development of the programmes, although this is problematic (157-158).

Hurst (1983) quotes Singleton (p9) to the effect that "few of the existing television services in developing countries can be described as an important component of the educational process. Many are not only unimportant, they are complete failures". Hurst's own studies of teacher reaction to educational TV in England and Sierra Leone provide interesting insights into why teachers often do not favour TV: "Inadequate advance information; inaccurate advance information; difficulty of controlling (i.e. selecting) content; content irrelevant; method unsuitable - encourages passivity, illiteracy and imposes lockstep; level too high/low; pace too fast/slow; no receiver; receiver u/s; poor reception; competition for receiver; educational returns do not justify difficulties in setting up; syllabus overcrowded - no room for 'enrichment material'; ancillary materials unavailable/arrive late/too expensive; timetabling problems - broadcast schedule and school timetable conflict; recording problems - no recordist or machine required for record and playback at the same time; accomodation of equipment; available time devoted to other innovations, no mains/batteries; poor audibility in classroom" (p10). Although this formidable list would not be entirely relevant to ABE, one would imagine that most of the points would be. (Hurst also includes a paper on the problem of media imperialism and the impact of media on traditional culture which is indirectly relevant to the present study - p52-65).

Escarpit (1982) makes a revealing comparison between the Ivory Coast, which opted for a heavy investment in educational television, as against Ghana, where preference was given to book development. Although the Ivory Coast's project was impressive, it increased dependency on French technology, the results did not justify the high costs, and it appeared to lead to "a stagnation of book production and even of newspaper reading (which) attenuated and sometimes nullified the effects of televised education" (p8). Ghana on the other hand has

developed more impressive indigenous publication, newspaper readership and library services. Escarpit undoubtedly favours the Ghanaian model, since "books are the nucleus of any productive information system. To date and presumably for a long time to come no technology and no 'software', however elaborate, can replace them in their specific role which is to provide individuals with the means of a critical and autonomous production of information, i.e. the weapon of freedom" (p9).

Prof H.S. Bhola (1983), a major international figure in the promotion of literacy believes that literacy programmes are best delivered in person. "Mass media play a motivational role; in many third world countries, radio is predominant, and since literacy is visual, radio can only help support and mobilize the population." Television, although more effective than radio, remains primarily a broadcast medium. "Mass media have a role, but literacy ultimately is the tool which will give the masses power in relation to the people who are now speaking on the radio. Mass media alone are just another form of dependency" for most of the world's population (p6).

Some mention should be made here of the thought of Paulo Freire because of its enormous influence on literacy work in the Third World. Freire's literacy work centres on dialogue and he is profoundly critical of education seen as a "donation" to the dispossessed. Thus he and other proponents of a language-experience approach are in principle opposed to the use of prescribed materials; presumably they would find television totally unacceptable in anything but the most circumscribed role, short of revolutionary innovation in the medium. (See inter alia Mackie, 1980: p39-56)

In "The World of Literacy" (International Council for Adult Education, 1979) the problem of dependency is discussed, and the point is made that "the scope and objectives of mass media do not correspond to those in functional literacy instruction" (p94). However, there is a more positive attitude towards television. "The visual immediacy of television, its ability to reach and move a mass audience, and its capability of dramatizing learning-by-doing, ideas, and events make it attractive as a means to penetrate illiteracy faster and more flexibly than the printed word" (p94). "Television may have a supplementary rather than a primary role in literacy and will most frequently be employed in bringing fresh information to the learner, helping him value what he is learning, helping him learn about the successes of others, helping him understand what his new knowledge can do for him... While this is a complementary role, it is extremely significant" (quotation p95). A Jamaican project is briefly discussed. Here a multi-media approach was used in a population with a reasonably high level of access to the mass media. The major problems appear to have been organisational, while the greatest value was found in the use of cassettes, especially audio cassettes, and in the use of video for microteaching. Teachers apparently learned a great deal from seeing how they talked down to the adult learners (p96).

(ii) India

In 1975 India embarked on a comprehensive one-year programme of education through television (Clergerie,1981). This was made possible by the establishment of satellite transmissions which enabled TV to reach the remotest village. The aim of the programme was to contribute

"towards national development: national unity and citizenship, modernisation and development, improvement of agriculture and animal husbandry, health, birth control, and education and the fight against illiteracy." Observations from the evaluation of the project include the following:

- More than 300 hours of programmes were produced for schools and rural adults, and the logistics of distributing tapes to centres and the satellite technology were judged to be total successes.
- Attendance at rural viewing centres was remarkable, with an average attendance per centre of 172 (350 at the beginning of the experiment, 100 at the end), and the majority of those viewers were adults.
- Greater use was made of sets placed at the centre of communities rather than on the outskirts.
- The programmes were often discussed by the viewers, but it seems clear that the retention of educational programmes was far greater when they were supported by organised discussions led by the local agent; without these many of the viewers only remembered the variety programmes, even though practical programmes were most avidly anticipated.
- Recommendations for development which entailed expense or risk were not retained except by viewers with some education.
- Programmes closely related to the lives of the learners were most successful, and faraway realities were seen as fictional drama by adult viewers. This is stated very strongly by the author: "We must underline the unquestionable superiority of programmes made with portable video (half-inch) in the very heart of the villages, and, therefore, reflecting everyday life. This superiority is evident in terms of impact, understanding, retention and changes in attitudes."
- It is pointed out that there cannot be "simple transplanlations" between media and education.
- The sheer effort of co-ordination is evident in Clergerie's article, as it is in many articles on Indian development programmes. Much work had to be done to integrate the specialized fields involved, to to ensure accountability and "to secure the articulations between the Federal Government and its agencies, States, Districts, Blocks, Villages with all their government functionaries, their associations, mechanisms, blockings, misunderstandings, rejections which all combine to impede the progress of beneficial changes for the general public."

(iii) Pakistan

Rafe-Uz-Zaman's article (1981) on the television based Adult Functional Literacy Project in Pakistan is so concise and packed with meticulous detail that it is only possible to draw a small number of points from it.

The project started in 1975 with a pilot project backed by a $220 000 grant from Unicef and was refined after evaluation. At the time the article was written the programme had been through 5 cycles. The original programme consisted of 21 telelessons to train teachers, and 156 half-hour literacy lessons, but the number of lessons was reduced to 87 because of financial problems in the fifth cycle. Interestingly,

this had no effect on the success of tuition - possibly because of the improvement in technique. The lessons made use of a whole battery of audio-visual techniques.

Lessons were held at community viewing centres with sets supplied by the project, but also reached large numbers of private viewers. The pilot project and all the cycles were evaluated and showed a high rate of success. The evaluations would appear, however, to suffer from the usual, and perhaps unavoidable, ambiguities. It is impossible to judge the cost effectiveness as figures are reported in Rupees. The author believes the savings to be substantial if there is an efficient extension of the use of the programmes, but emphasizes that "to be cost effective, the use of a mass medium must be on a massive scale." The large and growing number of illiterates in Pakistan in the 70's made this possible. The numbers remain daunting, though, when it is pointed out that even with 10 000 CVC's enrolling 100 people each, plus an estimated 200 000 private users, the system would still only make an optimum one million literate every year.

The project would seem to have experienced two major problems: securing financial backing for its successive cycles, and difficulties in managing and maintaining effectively functioning centres. Two curious features of the project were the confusion and reduction in attendance caused when lessons clashed with live-coverage of cricket or hockey matches, and the fact that two daily viewing sessions had to be arranged in order to separate the sexes.

(iv) Mexico

According to the figures in King (1983) the adult literacy profile for Mexico would appear to be similar to South Africa's. Mexico's Programa Nacional de Alfabetization was launched in mid-1981, and within a year had made 700 000 adults literate - a shortfall from the original one million envisaged because of difficulties in student "incorporation" and the country's financial problems. The use of television in this programme went through three stages. At first it provided publicity only, then it was used for training alfabetadores (instructors). The latest stage has been a programme which has been unprecedentedly popular in Mexico's TV educational broadcasting. The account of it deserves quotation in full:

"By far the most important use of television in PRONALF however has been the television series Aprendemos Juntos ('Let's Learn Together'). Aprendemos Juntos combines literacy teaching with a popular drama series something along the lines of Britain's Coronation Street. Ten minutes of each thirty minute programme is dedicated to the use of the alphabet, and twenty minutes to the lives of six adults who decide to join a literacy group and who all live in the same part of the city. The ten minutes of actual didactic content is dramatized through the participation of the six characters and the alfabetizador who is also an actor.

Students following the television series use a specially designed coursebook in combination with the television classes. They receive support from a visitador, a tutor who visits them at least once a week at home and an orientador, a literate member of the family or a

neighbour who provides support and guidance of an informal kind.

The TV series is broadly based on the direct group literacy method. The majority of students study on their own at home. In addition, some study groups have been formed, taking advantage of neighbours who own a television set or community classrooms used by the national system of secondary education through television - telesecundaria.

But whereas the direct literacy method uses printed media as a stimulus to the group discussion which precedes learning to read and write, the television literacy method uses dramatized situations. In the series a study group is formed composed of Dona Chole, a street vendor; El Sonora, an apprentice mechanic; Nacho, an unemployed aspiring boxer; Don Eduardo, a carpenter; Ursula, a servant; and Raquel, a housewife. The alfabetizador, Samuel, is a foreman on a building site.

The characters are all played by Mexican actors who to a certain extent have made their fame with the programme. The dramatized situations which affect the lives of the characters are those which affect illiterates and the poorer working classes in Mexico in general. Community problems such as lack of drinking water, rubbish collection, transport etc are portrayed, and problems such as being cheated and the general corruption which exists in Mexico.

Aprendemos Juntos surpassed all expectations in the response it has had from the general public, whether illiterate or literate. It owes its success not only to the fact that it manages to combine educational content with an enjoyable dramatized format, but it is also a genuinely Mexican series. The greater part of Mexican television is composed of American films and series; those programmes that are produced in Mexico tend to centre round passionate dramas of middle and upper middle class Mexican life, little related to the problems and lifestyle of the great majority of Mexicans. Aprendemos Juntos sets its characters in a poor working class community; they are true to life and the public identify with them.

The series is broadcast throughout Mexico on local TV channels. Each course lasts 100 hours of broadcasting time and takes the student four and a half months to complete."

The success of the TV programme was spectacular in urban areas, but did not reach the rural population. The programme was therefore extended to radio, in which among other things, literacy lessons were given a regional flavour. This was particularly important in the light of the fact that in 1970 only 28% of the population had electricity in their homes, whereas in a later survey 80% of illiterates were found to have a radio. As in the case of TV, radio is to be used in conjunction with course books and lessons.

(iv) Africa

Although television does not seem to have been used to any extent in ABE in Africa, Alallade (1983) offers a thoughtful view of the planning of educational TV in Nigeria. His article is interesting in that it approaches the anticipated problems largely from the point of view of a television executive than from that of an educationist.

TV has been used in Nigerian schools on a small scale, but has faced two problems: poor financial backing and teacher attitudes. Apparently teachers tended to see the TV lessons as free periods, in spite of the provision of handbooks to guide the integration of TV into the learning situation. This attitude was communicated to the pupils, who regarded the programmes at best as entertainment. Some of the programmes produced for ETV were broadcast on the national networks. The emphasis was on languages and civics. Programmes to teach the basics of Nigeria's three major languages elicited a hostile audience response. The problems of teaching languages through television have been the subject of a major workshop, but development is hampered by lack of finance. "French for Beginners" is taught once a week on one channel, but the approach raises a number of questions, particularly that concerning the brand of French (Metropolitan or African) to be taught. To make maximum use of the power of TV to extend understanding 200 community viewing centres have been established in far-flung areas of Nigeria.

In discussing development, Alallade stresses two main areas of concern. The first is the need to "combine education and entertainment in such good proportions as to attract and sustain listenership." He quotes extensively from a Japanese authority on compensatory adult education through TV. The Japanese experience had been that the programmes produced initially attracted very few viewers, but that a gradual change was perceptible towards a more positive image of ETV. The second area of concern is the special commitment required for ETV. "Educational broadcasting, especially through television, is a highly specialised industry demanding of its officers a high sense of duty, commitment, integrity and resourcefulness."

Alallade is deeply convinced of the educational power of TV, and he points to several areas which need attention: the development of practitioners and the provision of back-up material, the support of the public - in which the problem of "the craze for paper qualifications" must be dealt with, and the support of the government, since quality can only be attained through adequate finance.

4. SUMMING UP

"There is growing international concern for making both public and private broadcasting channels respond more vigorously to meet the educational needs of the people" (Rao, 1983). Educational TV is very much a pioneering endeavour, and what experience teaches so far suggests that the potential has not been fully exploited, nor have the substantial problems been solved with any finality. It is clear that a modest and exploratory approach must be taken to exploiting the medium, and that the rapid achievement of striking success must not be expected. Many of the problems can be overcome with sufficient will. One problem stands out, however. The fundamental principles of ABE as expressed at the beginning of this review are concerned with enabling people to meet their needs. Sensitivity to needs - a complex issue - may be at odds with the medium. As Garforth (1983) puts it, "designers of media for literacy programmes face a dual problem. There is little opportunity for exploratory dialogue before the content of their media is transmitted or distributed to an audience of perhaps several million people. At the same time the need for such dialogue is far greater

than in a party conversation, because there is likely to be far less common ground between media producers and their non-literate audience than between two strangers at a party." The solution to this can only lie in a synthesis of awareness, imagination and experimentation.

In spite of these challenges, it is the sense of potential which stands out in the literature. Williams (1981) makes a succinct statement of this potential:

"Television provides an encompassing medium able to deal with educational, socio-cultural, political aspects, as well as being able to offer much practical instruction. Programs for adult literacy, or literacy in general, can benefit from this medium and its techniques. As a medium which offers several approaches to instruction, television allows for the possibility of shortening the time needed for the learner to digest and study materials. For example, television offers immediate reinforcement since it includes several variables - sound, verbalization, non-verbal language, and pictorial presentations, and in some cases, dramatization. The visualization affords additional clarification of points that may not be grasped immediately through verbalization, while the pictorial additions can serve to emphasize functional or structural relationships imbedded in the verbalization. Further to this, the pictorial and visualization aspects of the medium are able to transform the character of the information being presented, making it easier to be assimilated than if it was being presented through the print medium. In education for wide literacy, problems often occur when there is a shortage of trained and other personnel, and where the learners are adults with limited time to devote to learning. The ability of television to offer these added informational clarifications, makes for easier learning and underlines the usefulness of this medium in the literacy process of developing nations.

Additional advantages are that the visual experience of the audio-visual media may be more able to capture the attention of the learner, and that dramatization may further increase this effect. One other fact which should be considered is that the conventional method of print may be more difficult to grasp initially than do the audio-visual approaches...

In terms of practical education for everyday life, television can also be extremely useful, for the visualization, accompanied by verbal instructions, allows for vivid and detailed demonstrations. It also affords repetition. Keeping in mind the type of adult learner concerned, these qualifications are important.

Important too in the choice of television is that if the cost of individual sets is prohibitive, governments can establish centers with state-owned sets where people may gather to view the programs. On the other hand, television also allows the individual to learn in privacy and at home if the price of a set is affordable.

Other media such as video may also be part of the literacy process where personnel is available. Such systems have high relating potential in their ability to actively involve the learner, and give immediate feedback on performance...

Communications media can play a vital role in the literacy process of

the developing countries ... (and) ... work towards the betterment of the society."

APPENDIX B
THE HSRC REPORT ON THE USE OF RADIO AND TELEVISION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING: SUMMARY OF RELEVANT ASPECTS

Shortly after the present "Text for Comment" was distributed the HSRC released its report on "The Use of Radio and Television in Education and Training" (1984). The report discusses a number of the sources used in the present study. It is of necessity generalised, and I have selected only those aspects of the report which are relevant to the question of ABE. I do not discuss Chapter 3 of the HSRC report; this chapter contains a most useful survey of the literature which could be read in conjunction with the present study.

The HSRC report had its origin in a number of recommendations of the de Lange Commission, the most relevant of which is "that urgent measures, employing the potential of educational technology, be taken in the non-formal area of education with particular focus on literacy, health and social education, agricultural extension, preparatory skills for the disadvantaged at all levels, and continuing education generally" (p13).

The report on educational radio and TV starts from two basic principles, that "educational technology is most successful when used in direct response to an identified need of those for whom it is meant to serve, (and that) the use of educational media is not as important as the development of suitable contexts for their use. A situation analysis must eventually lead to decisions regarding what media can be used to achieve certain learning objectives at specified times with specified learners" (p19).(It could be said that it is on the grounds of the second of these principles that the main problem with the MMF's proposal is to be found.)

Among the basic needs categorised in Chapter 2 of the HSRC report are: "the ability to take part in community life and to understand the nature of society, for example its history and image of itself, the duties and tasks of government and administration, taxation, social security, co-operatives and self-help movements, (and) the development of the individual's ability to think critically and to form his own world and to take an active part in the development process...technical knowledge and skills can also be added to this list" (p22). In an extensive list of specific learning needs we find "a need (on the part of the Black population groups) for an understanding of the capitalist free-market system" (p33), "communication and understanding in the work situation" and "knowledge of applicable technical terminology (which) can be positively promoted at the non-formal level" (p35). Literacy itself is one of the major needs, and is discussed fairly fully (p36-37), with stress being placed on the need for a broader concern than the skills of reading and writing alone, and on the social and manpower implications of widespread illiteracy. It is pointed out that "a specific target group is often not aware that it lacks knowledge that will in future be necessary... In satisfying learning needs it will be essential to create the context beforehand" (p23).

Some of the important advantages of television which are listed are as follows: "The range of educational television and the logistic requirements that ETV sets, compel a commitment to change and facilitate additional changes in education... The dramatic nature of television attracts wide interest and can symbolize change and

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'modernization' for a broad target group... Television facilitates the obtaining of financial resources from outside... (and) a medium such as television may be a catalyst for other changes in the provision of education and the consequent effect can be just as significant in this regard as the direct learning effect" (p42). Much can be learnt from the experience elsewhere, including the idea that "the use of television is more effective when distinctive concepts and educational practices are established for this medium. The mere duplication of existing lessons is a waste of money and time" (p44).

Undoubtedly the most important recommendation for the present report is that regarding the agency by which educational radio and TV would be promoted. After looking into the possibility of a new and independent organisation for educational media, the report recommends that educational radio and television should fall under the aegis of the SABC ("in consultation with interested institutions"). The decision was taken on the grounds of financial considerations, of the problem of duplication of facilities and of the urgency of integrating radio and television in education" (p11). A dissenting opinion of one member of the committee on this major decision is mentioned but is not elucidated. Other specific recommendations of interest are that: "A video cassette service should be introduced together with ETV... The television service for Blacks should eventually be extended to cover the rural areas as well... Further investigation should be conducted into ... the different ways of providing and maintaining television sets and power generators economically;... the possibility of enabling learners to obtain recognized qualifications ... with the help of ER and ETV; the development of an infrastructure for establishing teleclubs in order to make optimal use of ER and ETV; ... interstate collaboration with regard to ER and ETV; (and) the training of the users of ER and ETV" (p11).

The HSRC report provides support for many of the points made in the present report. It seems clear that the development of ER and ETV is going to be a long and extensive process. The decision to situate educational television within the SABC, even when the proviso of consultation with interested intstitutions is taken into consideration, seems to suggest that projects like that under consideration are likely to be initiated by the SABC, and that the interested institutions will play the roles of consultants and pressure groups. Only with time and through the process of negotiation will the implications of the recommeded dispensation be clarified. This means that the private sector and its representatives, such as the MMF, might more profitably engage first in the negotiation than attempt to initiate or carry out projects which depend for their success on the chance that they will engage the support of the SABC. This is of course only one constraint on the feasibility or desirability of the project under consideration.

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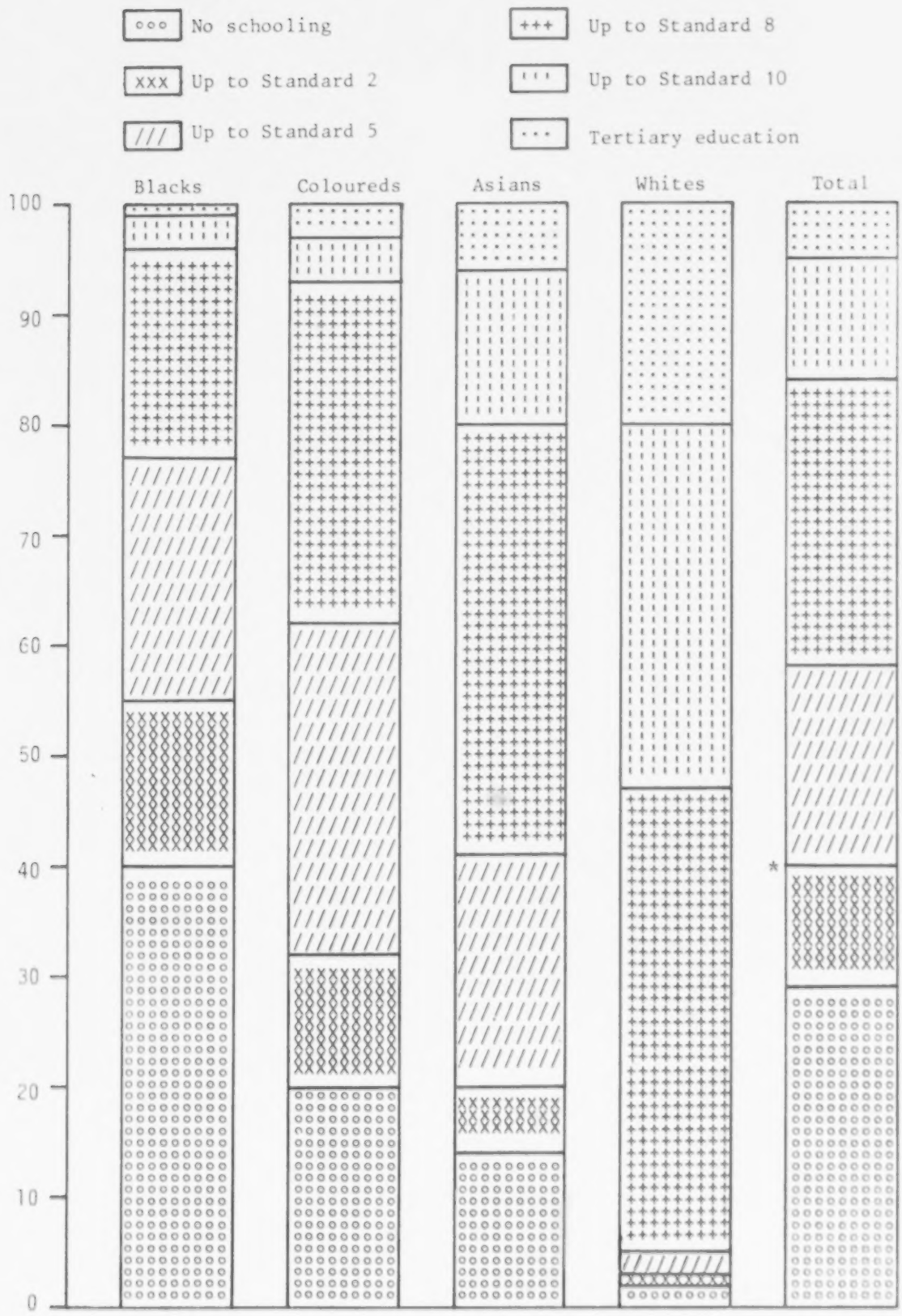
APPENDIX C
DISTRIBUTION OF FORMAL EDUCATION LEVELS
AMONG ADULTS (20+) IN THE RSA IN 1980

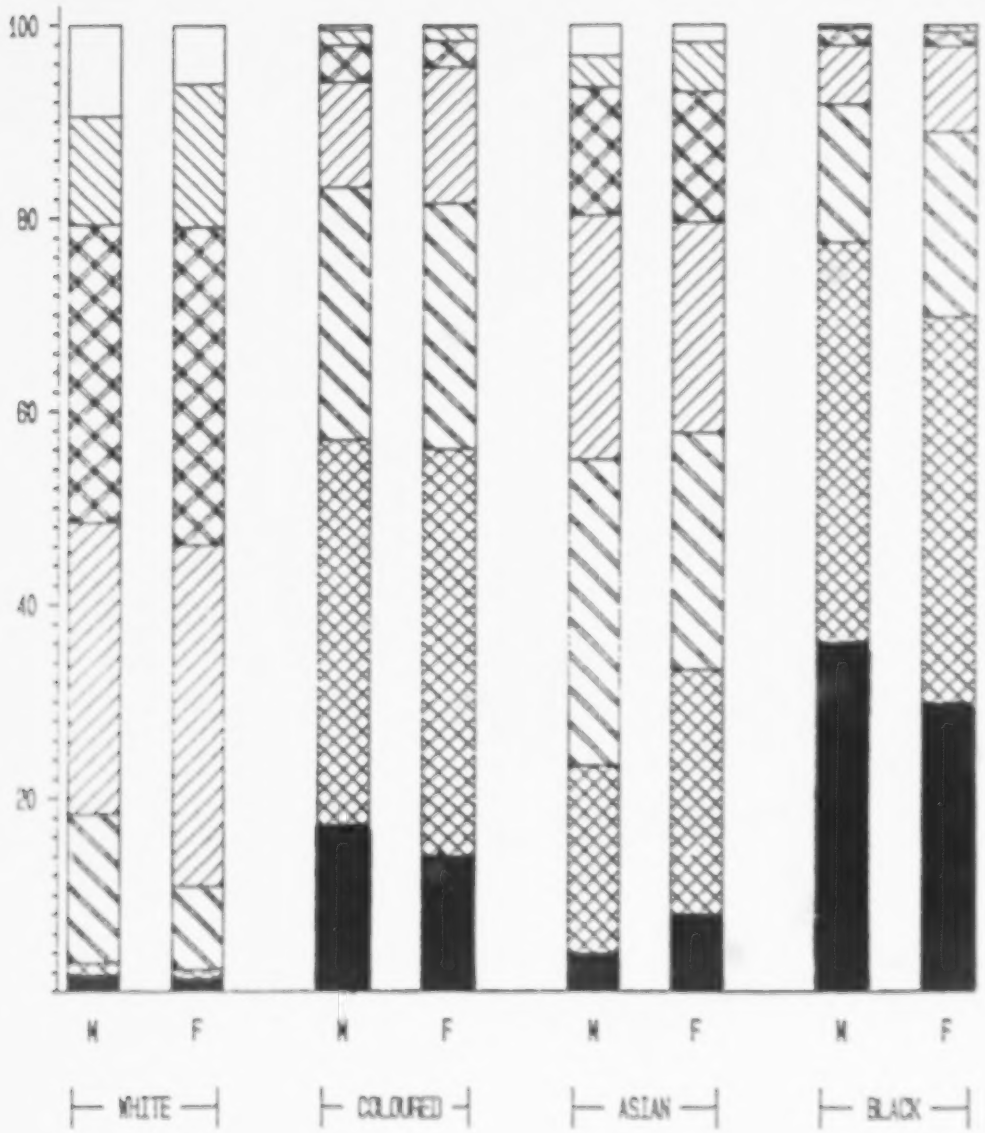
Educational level	Blacks			Coloureds			Asians			Whites			Total		
	n	Cum. f	Cum. %	n	Cum. f	Cum. %	n	Cum. f	Cum. %	n	Cum. f	Cum. %	n	Cum.f	Cum.
None	3 268 900	3 268 900	40	254 100	254 100	20	58 000	58 000	14	64 940	64 940	2	3 645 940	3 645 940	29
Up to Std. 1	620 220	3 889 120	47	74 180	328 280	26	12 160	70 340	17	7 980	72 920	3	714 540	4 360 480	34
2	597 060	4 486 180	55	67 020	395 300	32	15 340	85 500	20	6 700	79 620	3	686 120	5 046 600	40
3	553 260	5 039 440	61	87 980	483 280	39	17 160	102 660	24	8 920	88 540	3	667 320	5 713 920	45
4	632 220	5 671 660	69	119 460	602 740	48	29 460	132 120	31	21 460	110 000	4	802 600	6 516 520	51
5	682 200	6 353 860	77	169 780	772 520	62	40 480	172 600	41	33 080	143 080	5	925 540	7 442 060	58
6	856 820	7 210 680	88	211 140	983 660	78	88 940	261 540	62	320 960	464 040	16	1 477 860	8 919 920	70
7	322 100	7 532 780	92	91 840	1 075 500	86	26 960	288 500	68	190 620	654 660	23	631 520	9 551 440	75
8	389 440	7 922 220	96	91 980	1 167 480	93	53 980	342 480	81	658 180	1 312 840	47	1 193 580	10 745 020	84
9	111 960	8 034 180	98	20 940	1 188 420	95	19 380	361 860	85	162 220	1 475 060	52	314 500	11 059 520	87
10	122 720	8 156 900	99	33 080	1 221 500	97	40 200	402 060	95	781 680	2 256 740	80	977 680	12 037 200	95
Tertiary	71 540	8 228 440	100	34 860	1 256 360	100	22 140	424 200	100	565 400	2 822 140	100	693 940	12 731 140	100

*Unspecified educational level not included.

DISTRIBUTION OF FORMAL EDUCATION LEVELS
AMONG ADULTS (20+) IN THE RSA IN 1980



EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE LABOUR FORCE, 1980



SOURCE: CENTRAL STATISTICAL SERVICES

Terblanche et al (1983)

APPENDIX D

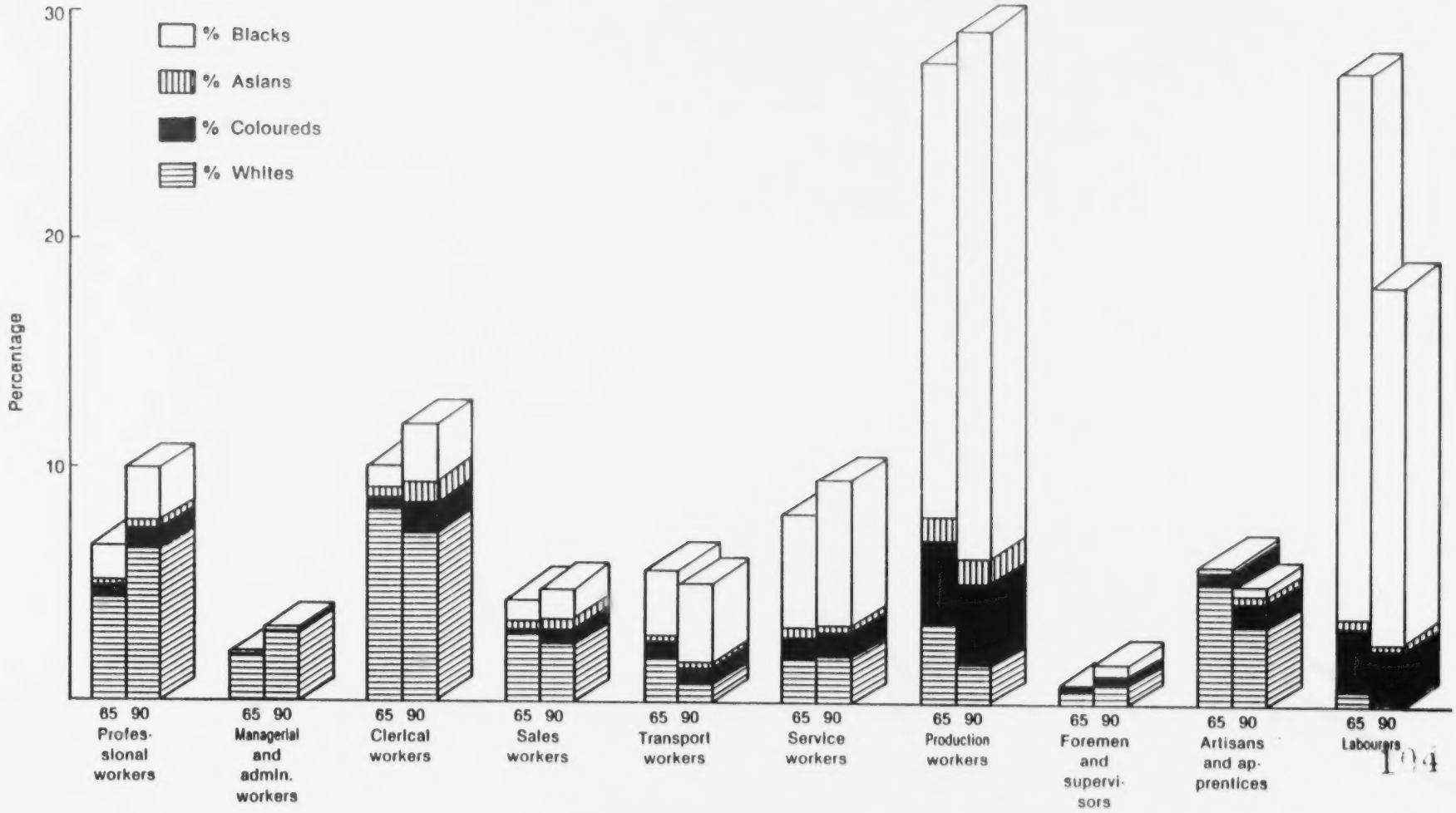
THE CHANGING STRUCTURE OF THE WORKING POPULATION

The essential facts of the situation and their implications for the development of non-formal education are briefly summarized by Lee (1983), page 8:

> The working population as a whole will increase from 10,5m in 1980 to 17,6m in 2000, with 5,8m of the 7,1m increase coming from the Black population. Of these 7,1m jobs, approximately 5,5m will be in the modern sector, requiring basic education and further training. In fact, other data indicates that employment in unskilled occupations could actually decline during this period (from 37% to 29% of the total) while the demand for high level manpower will increase from 10% to 17% of total demand and for skilled persons from 23% to 25%. These statistics all combine to indicate increasing demands for better educated and better trained members of the working population.
>
> In such a situation, education (and especially non-formal education) becomes the essential difference between the prospect of employment or unemployment. The structure of the economy itself is changing in a way that will further emphasise the mismatch between the historical provision of education and training and the career/employment opportunities being created in the future. This observation applies at sophisticated levels of technological change, as well as at the interface between skilled and semi-skilled work and education will play a critical role in both levels.

The changes are graphically illustrated by Terblanche et al (1983) on the following page ...

THE OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN LABOUR FORCE, 1965 and 1990



Terblanche et al (1983)

APPENDIX E

THE NEED FOR LITERACY IN INDUSTRY: THE MOST COMMON ARGUMENTS PROVIDED BY TRAINING PERSONNEL

The following points are made in Wedepohl (1984), page 71:

There is a very wide consensus among training personnel that lack of literacy hampers training tremendously. A corollary of this is that promotion is blocked for the illiterate. Some examples emanating from interviews and questionnaire responses are:

* Low educational level limits the amount and kind of training an illiterate can receive; conceptual abilities are hampered; limited retention of information.

* Illiterate supervisors cannot cope with demands of either the job situation or formal classroom-type training.

* Trainees have difficulty transferring skills to job situation; cannot apply acquired skills in practice.

* Duration of course needs to be extended to allow for more repetition of information (i.e. cost increases); training programmes have to be designed/presented differently; all communication has to be verbal; written tests and note-taking are impossible.

* One respondent distinguishes between 'total illiteracy' (the inability to read anything) and 'technical illiteracy' (being able to read words, but not training handouts or overhead transparencies, with understanding); this would correspond to the concept of 'functional illiteracy'.

  The situation is aggravated in a multi-lingual society. Fanagalo is resorted to for technical training, but is resented.

* Several respondents noted that a company policy to promote from within cannot be applied fairly in the case of long-term but illiterate employees. They have inevitably been locked into the most menial jobs. Bitterness and hurt results when loyal older employees are overlooked in favour of a more educated outsider.

* One respondent informed the writer that the company employs only matriculants - several of whom have literacy and numeracy problems!

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